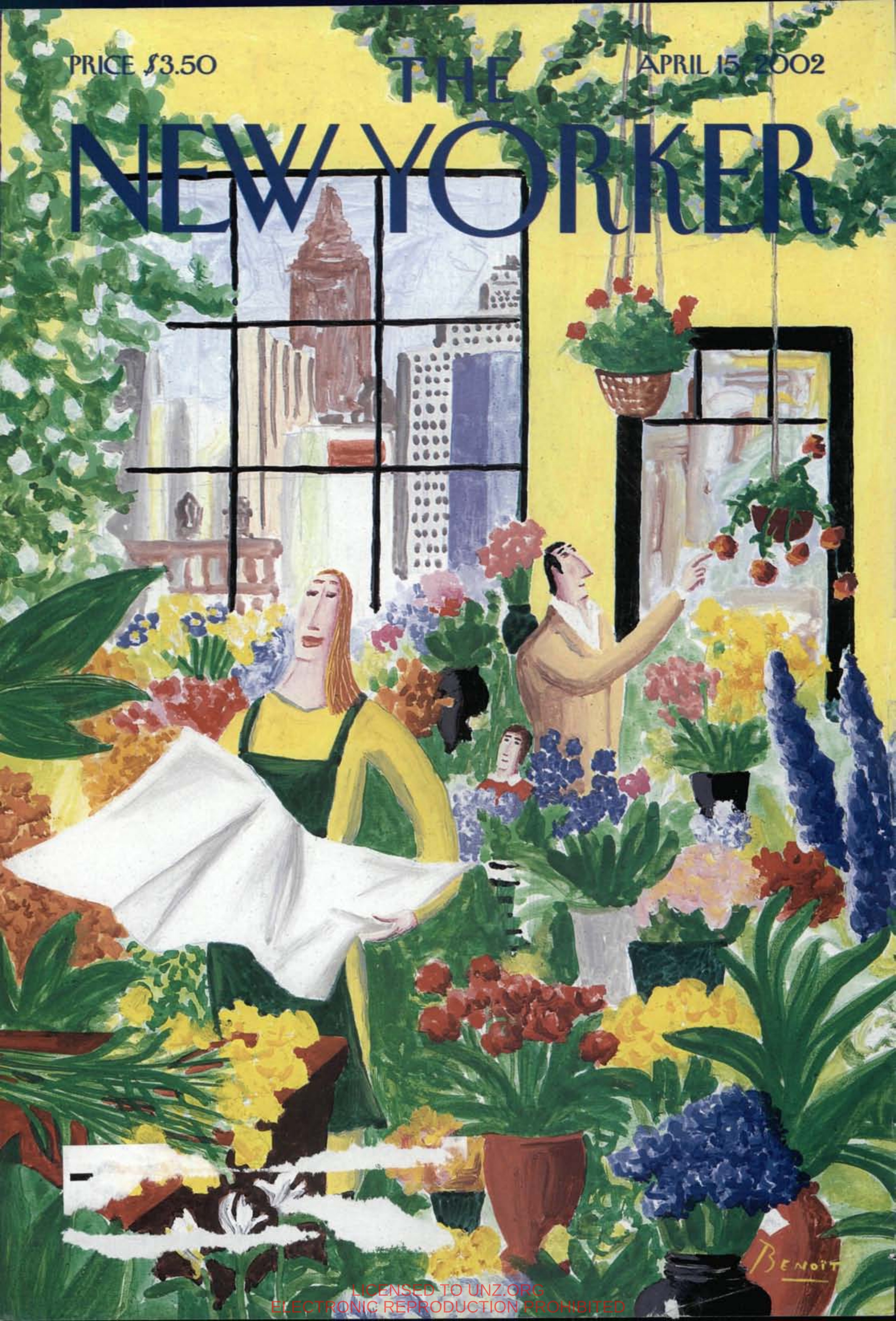
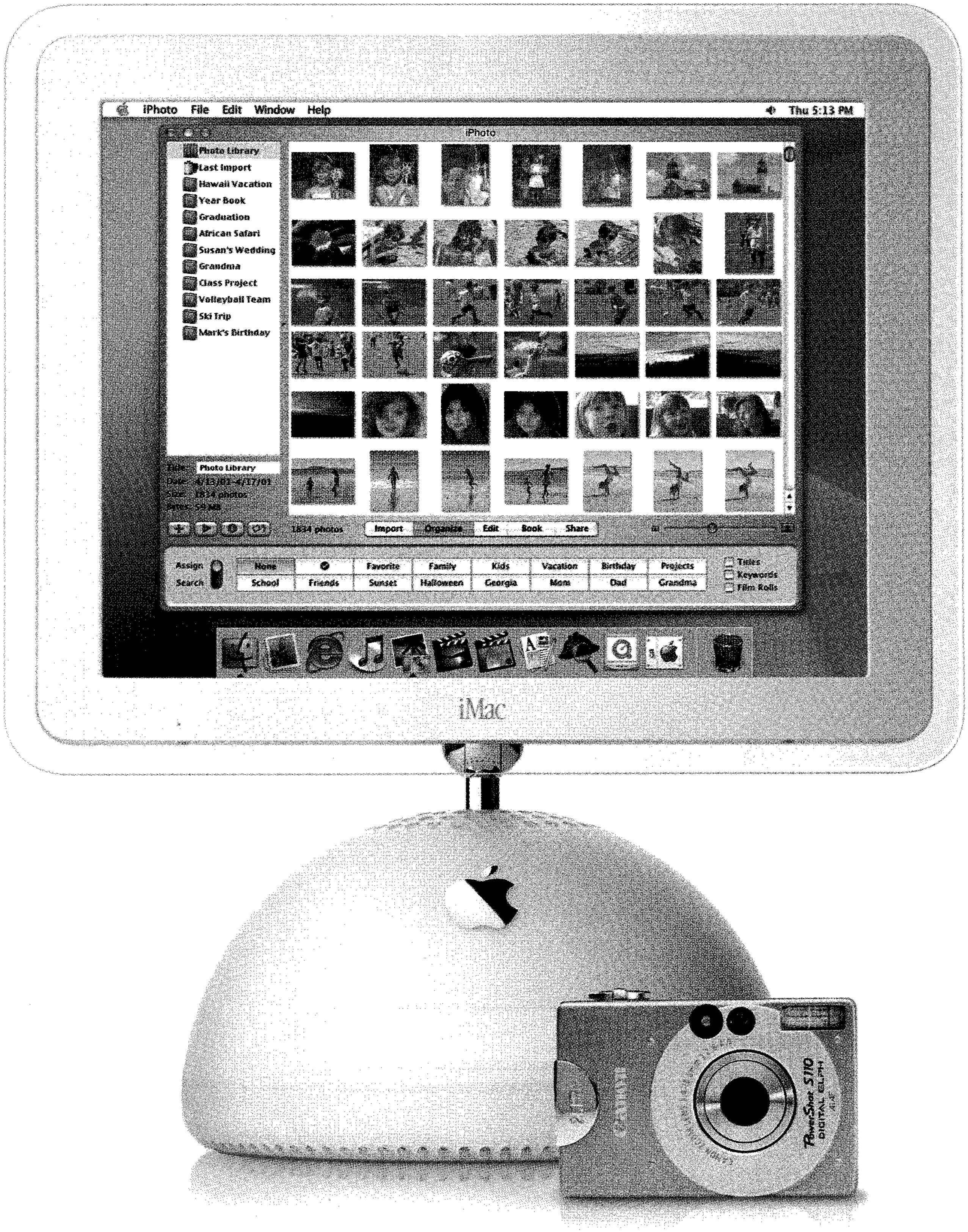
PRICE $3.50

THE NEW YORKER

APRIL 15, 2002




iPhoto
File
Edit
Window
Help
Thu 5:13 PM
iPhoto
Photo Library
Last Import
Hawaii Vacation
Year Book
Graduation
African Safari
Susan's Wedding
Grandma
Class Project
Volleyball Team
Ski Trip
Mark's Birthday
Title: Photo Library
1834 photos
Import
Organize
Edit
Book
Share
Assign
Search
None
Favorite
Family
Kids
Vacation
Birthday
Projects
School
Friends
Sunset
Halloween
Georgia
Mom
Dad
Grandma
Titles
Keywords
Film Rolls
iMac
Canon
PowerShot S110
DIGITAL ELPH

*For a complete list of supported cameras visit www.apple.com/iphoto. †Book and print ordering services available in U.S. and Canada only (English version onl

Shoot like Ansel.
Organize like Martha.

Presenting iPhoto, the revolutionary new way to save, organize and share all of your digital pictures. Just plug your camera[*] into your Mac's USB port and iPhoto automatically imports your photos, catalogs them, stores them and displays them on your screen.

Then you can easily organize them into albums – birthday, vacation, wedding, whatever – for easy retrieval. (If you're familiar with iTunes, think "playlists" for pictures.) Sharing and enjoying them is a cinch, too. Push one button to view a beautiful, full-screen slide show. Email them to friends. Print them on your ink jet printer. Order Kodak prints over the Internet. Or even design and order a stunning, custom-printed, linen-covered, hardbound book of your photos![†]

How much does this amazing new software cost? For Mac® OS X users, iPhoto is a free download at apple.com. But for PC users, there's nothing like it at any price.

iPhoto

ees apply. iPhoto software requires Mac OS X. TM and ©2002 Apple Computer, Inc. All rights reserved. For more information, call 1-800-MY-APPLE or visit www.apple.com.

NO
STICKER
SHOCK.

At these scandalously low prices, you can squeeze even more books into your budget.

It's enough to make you weak in the knees. Brand new, top quality books — covering hundreds of topics and titles — at less than half the list price. Daedalus offers an incredible selection of remainder books from mystery to philosophy, cooking to photography, history to gardening, and kid's classics too.

What are remainders? They're "surplus" books. The difference between what a publisher prints, and what gets sold. Daedalus sells the best of them at up to 90% off. So call today for your free catalog. Or visit our Web site and order online. You'll be amazed at what buying remainders can do for your bottom line.

daedalusbooks.com

You can also find us at
salebooks.com

Bargain Books At Up To 90% Off

For a free catalog call
1-800-395-2665

THE NEW YORKER

APRIL 15, 2002

6 GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN
27 THE TALK OF THE TOWN
Bush and the Middle East; Lotto fiction.

Calvin Trillin 36 ANNALS OF GASTRONOMY
Don't Mention It
An unusual Village restaurant.

Paul Slansky 43 SHOUTS & MURMURS
Nixon on Tape: The Quiz

Calvin Tomkins 44 DEPT. OF EDUCATION
Can Art Be Taught?
Paint flies at Harvard.

Jeffrey Toobin 50 PROFILES
Ashcroft's Ascent
Civil liberties, terrorism, and the future.

Larissa MacFarquhar 64 ANNALS OF SHOW BUSINESS
Oakdale Days
The man who torments a town for a living.

Nicholas Lemann 72 ALBUM
The Way They Were

Haruki Murakami 74 FICTION
"Tony Takitani"

THE CRITICS

Peter Schjeldahl 82 THE ART WORLD
A Barnett Newman retrospective.

85 BOOKS
Briefly Noted

Nancy Franklin 86 THE THEATRE
"Fortune's Fool," "The Underpants," "The Graduate."

David Denby 88 THE CURRENT CINEMA
"Time Out," "Les Destinées."

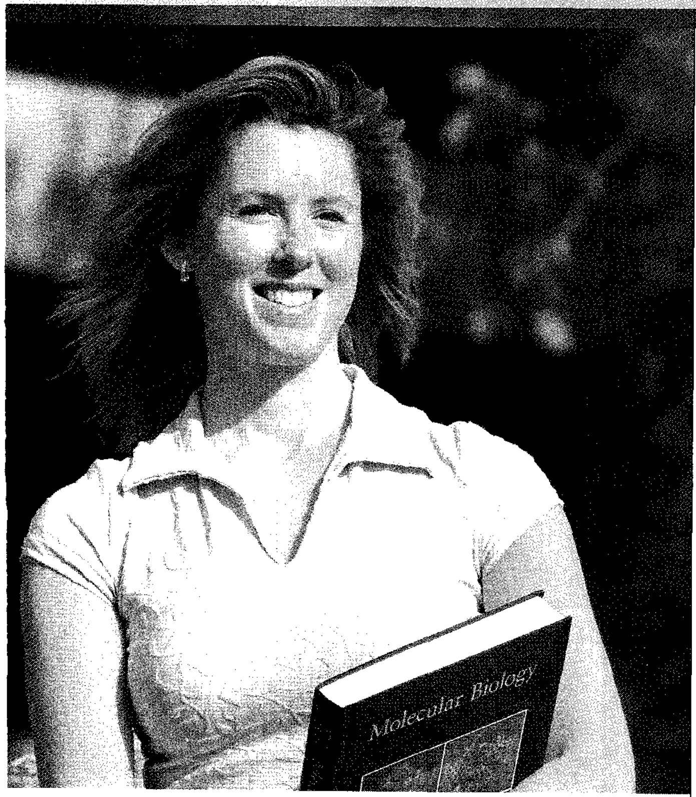
POEMS

Kelle Groom 38 "The Boy with His Mother Inside Him"
Matthew Zapruder 57 "Tiburon"
Elizabeth Alexander 80 "When"

COVER *"Garden Apartment," by Benoît van Innis* THE BACK PAGE *"The National Freezer," by Seymour Chwast and Andy Borowitz* DRAWINGS *David Sipress, Mike Twohy, P. C. Vey, John O'Brien, Danny Shanahan, J. C. Duffy, Leo Cullum, Gahan Wilson, Frank Cotham, Victoria Roberts, Alex Gregory, Roz Chast, Lee Lorenz, Bruce Eric Kaplan, Matthew Diffee, Robert Mankoff*

www.newyorker.com

Novartis and Suzan drove her Cancer into remission in 35 days.



"One minute I was looking at death. The next, I was looking at my whole life in front of me."

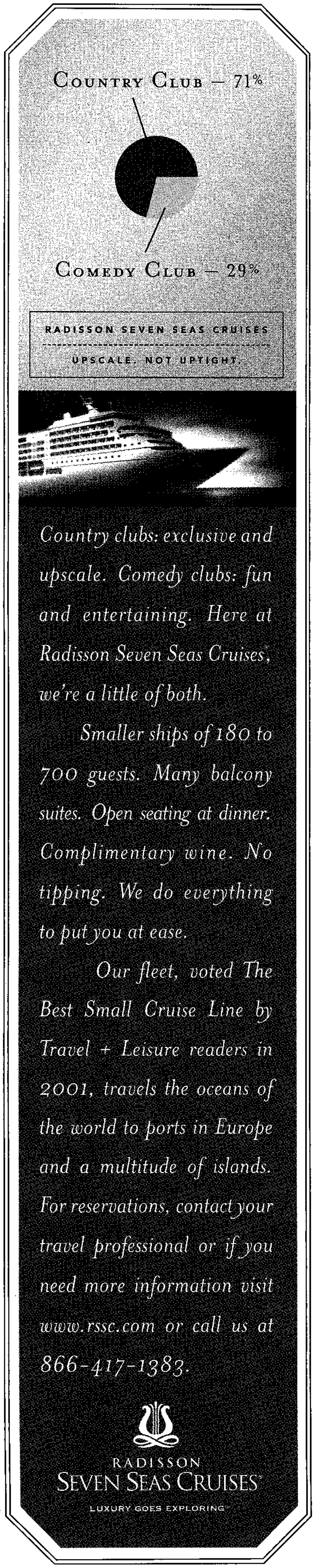
— Suzan M.

Suzan had been fighting a losing battle against cancer for three long years. By January 2000, she was too sick to continue her studies. She was losing weight, her hair, and at times, her will to live. But today Suzan feels better than ever. And as a result of her experience, she's now pursuing a new degree, and a new career, in molecular biology. Novartis is proud to be the innovative force that's bringing new optimism and hope to patients and their families. No one can promise what the future holds for cancer patients, but today Suzan is winning the fight against her particular form of cancer, enjoying a good quality of life and realizing her dreams.

Think what's possible.

NOVARTIS

www.novartis.com



Country clubs: exclusive and upscale. Comedy clubs: fun and entertaining. Here at Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, we're a little of both.

Smaller ships of 180 to 700 guests. Many balcony suites. Open seating at dinner. Complimentary wine. No tipping. We do everything to put you at ease.

Our fleet, voted The Best Small Cruise Line by Travel + Leisure readers in 2001, travels the oceans of the world to ports in Europe and a multitude of islands. For reservations, contact your travel professional or if you need more information visit www.rssc.com or call us at 866-417-1383.

RADISSON
SEVEN SEAS CRUISES
LUXURY GOES EXPLORING

Ship's Registries: Bahamas, Wallis & Futuna

CONTRIBUTORS

Jeffrey Toobin ("Ashcroft's Ascent," p. 50) is the author of "A Vast Conspiracy" and "Too Close to Call: The Thirty-Six-Day Battle to Decide the 2000 Election."

Calvin Trillin ("Don't Mention It," p. 36) has written three books on eating, which form the collection "The Tummy Trilogy." His new book, "Tepper Isn't Going Out," a novel, was published in January.

Kelle Groom (Poem, p. 38), whose work has appeared in a number of quarterlies; Matthew Zapruder (Poem, p. 57), whose first book of poems, "American Linden," comes out next month; and Elizabeth Alexander (Poem, p. 80), whose most recent collection is "Antebellum Dream Book," are first-time contributors to the magazine.

Nancy Franklin (The Theatre, p. 86) is a theatre critic for the magazine.

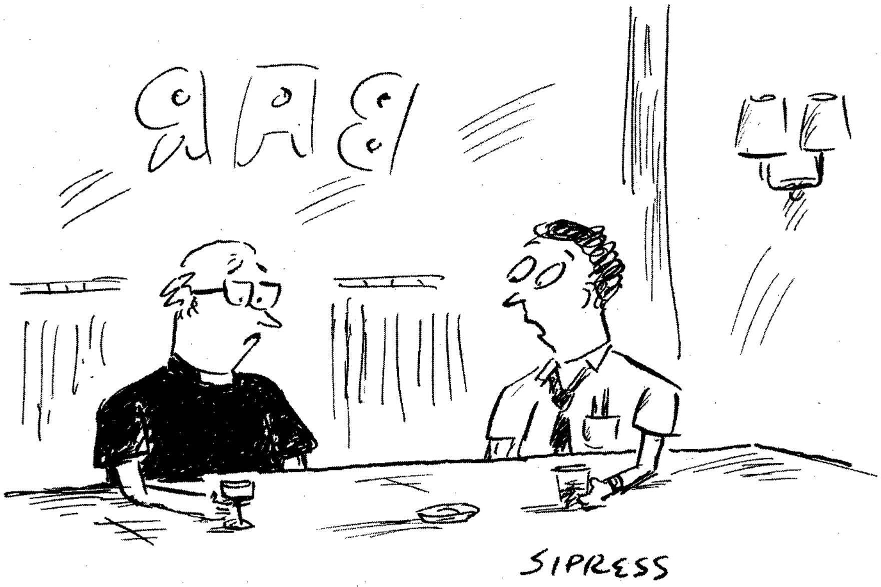
Calvin Tomkins ("Can Art Be Taught?," p. 44) has published twelve books, including "Living Well Is the Best Revenge" and "Duchamp: A Biography."

Larissa MacFarquhar ("Oakdale Days," p. 64) has been a staff writer since 1998.

Philip Burke (Illustration, p. 64) is a regular contributor. His first illustration appeared in 1990.

Haruki Murakami (Fiction, p. 74) is the author of several novels, including "South of the Border, West of the Sun" and "Sputnik Sweetheart." His second short-story collection, "After the Quake," will be published this summer.

Paul Slansky (Shouts & Murmurs, p. 43) is a television and film writer and the author of "The Clothes Have No Emperor." ♦



"Believe me, Father, I know just how you feel. I'm an accountant."

THE NEW YORKER, 4 Times Square, N.Y., N.Y. 10036-6592. David Carey, vice-president and publisher; Chris Mitchell, associate publisher; Peter W. Jurew, associate publisher, marketing; Marie Wolpert, advertising manager; Ronda Carnegie, sales development director; Peter Zuckerman, national sales manager; Susan Harrington, director of creative services; Louis Montesano, director of marketing and strategic planning; Theresa Gaffney, creative development director; Rosemary Stanton, advertising business director. For advertising inquiries, please call Marie Wolpert at (212) 286-5611. For submission guidelines, please refer to our Web site, www.newyorker.com. The New Yorker does not accept unsolicited submissions by mail or fax, and is not responsible for the return or loss of submissions, or for any damage or other injury to unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. © 2002 by The Condé Nast Publications Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. The periodical's name and logo, and the various titles and headings herein, are trademarks of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc., published through its division The Condé Nast Publications Inc. S. I. Newhouse, Jr., chairman; Steven T. Florio, president and C.E.O.; Charles H. Townsend, executive vice-president and C.O.O.; John W. Bellando, executive vice-president and C.F.O.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE: To inquire about a subscription or to change an address, please write to The New Yorker, P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037-0684, telephone (800) 825-2510, E-mail to subscriptions@newyorker.com, or visit our Web site at www.newyorker.com. To purchase a back issue telephone (800) 825-2510. Outside North America, call (515) 243-3273. For a change of address, subscribers should give four weeks' notice. If possible, please send the address label from a recent issue. Occasionally, we make our subscriber list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services we believe would interest our readers. If you do not want to receive these offers and/or information, please advise us at P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037-0684.

THE MAIL

BEST-LAID PLANS

Seymour M. Hersh describes a plan for an assault on Iraq, "enthusiastically endorsed by the civilian leadership in the Pentagon," that involves "a small, mobile attack force" of dissidents who will trigger an internal revolt ("The Debate Within," March 11th). We've heard this plan before: it was the model used for the Bay of Pigs invasion. Why would officials dust it off, when it failed miserably in a smaller, closer country? Why would they disregard experts like Kenneth Pollack, who estimates that the number of troops needed is in the hundreds of thousands? Perhaps they should consult Irving Janis's seminal, 1972 book on "groupthink," which he defines as a decision-making pathology caused by excessive conformity within an organization. He derived the concept, in part, from an analysis of the Bay of Pigs.
Inger Weibust
Assistant Professor, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

HOW TO HAIL A CAB

As a cabdriver, I found James Surowiecki's analysis of New York's taxi shortage insightful (The Talk of the Town, March 18th). But he fails to address one main reason that many cabs sit idle. As there is no union representing the city's forty thousand drivers, the Taxi and Limousine Commission has for years gone unchecked, issuing harsh, unreasonable rules. These have led to poor conditions for drivers, making it increasingly difficult to earn a living. In fact, many new drivers last only a few months. As long as the T.L.C. oppresses drivers with endless red tape, there will be too few cabs on the street.
Jonathan Parillo
New York City

Surowiecki writes, "New York has almost ten thousand fewer cabs than it did seventy years ago." That may be true of medallion cabs, but the T.L.C. also licenses fifty thousand other vehicles: black cars that serve businesses and livery cabs that mostly serve the outer boroughs. Medallion owners complain, with some reason, that these cars illegally poach street hails; at the same time, as Surowiecki notes, they oppose more medallions. A compromise would be to give owners a second medallion—their investment would be safe, and the rest of us might be able to get a cab at rush hour.
Dan Ackman
New York City

COLD ISLAND

Atul Gawande, in his article on the mysteries of the common cold, writes of a settlement on the Arctic island of Spitsbergen, whose five hundred residents were healthy while they were iced in, but suffered a cold epidemic when the summer's first ship docked ("Cold Comfort," March 11th). In 1768, Dr. Johnson and James Boswell discussed a similar story, about St. Kilda, in the Hebrides, but, a century before the germ theory of disease, it struck them as implausible. Johnson said that Kenneth Macaulay, the author of a book on St. Kilda, "wanted to be a smart modern thinker; and yet he affirms for a truth, that when a ship arrives there, all the inhabitants are seized with a cold." (Boswell then cited a "solution": "The situation of St. Kilda renders a North-East Wind indispensably necessary before a stranger can land. The wind, not the stranger, occasions an epidemic cold.") But when Boswell told him that Macaulay had been advised to omit the story, Johnson said, "Sir, to leave things out of a book, merely because people tell you they will not be believed, is meanness. Macaulay acted with more magnanimity."
Richard H. Backus
Falmouth, Mass.

•

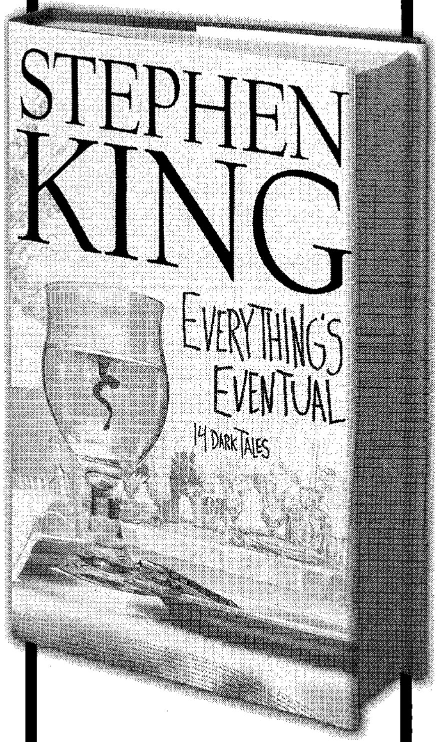
Letters should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number via e-mail to themail@newyorker.com. They can also be faxed to 212-286-5047. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium; we regret that owing to the volume of correspondence we cannot reply to every letter.

New from **#1**
New York Times
bestselling author

STEPHEN
KING

"Up there in the Maine woods, he's our modern Aesop, Calypso, and Scheherazade, as well as a Devil's Advocate, a Wandering Jew, a Magic Flute, and, of course, a Ringling Brothers' Circus Strongboy."

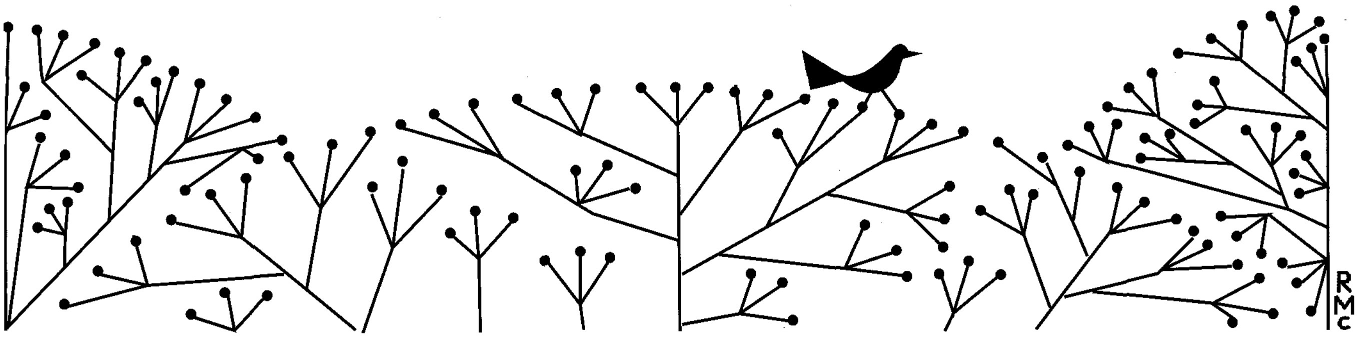
—John Leonard,
The New York Review of Books



palm eBook for Palm OS℠ handhelds available at www.palm.com/eBooks
SCRIBNER A Division of Simon & Schuster A Viacom Company
ALSO AVAILABLE FROM SIMON & SCHUSTER AUDIO

www.simonsays.com/stephenking

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BLUE SURGE
A drama by Rebecca Gilman ("Spinning Into Butter"), which revolves around the police interrogation of two prostitutes after a massage-parlor sting. Robert Falls is the director. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

THE ELEPHANT MAN
Billy Crudup has the title role in a revival of Bernard Pomerance's 1979 drama, directed by Sean Mathias. Kate Burton and Rupert Graves are also in the cast. In previews through April 13. Opens April 14 at 6:30. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GOLEM
Robert Prosky stars in H. Leivick's 1921 version of the legend of the Golem of Prague, in which a sixteenth-century rabbi defies God to protect his people from attack. Lawrence Sacharow is the director. Preview on April 10. Opens April 11 at 8. (Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 239-6200.)

JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN
The Century Center's Ibsen series continues with the playwright's 1896 drama about a corrupt banker who has sacrificed love for money. In previews through April 13. Opens April 14 at 3. (111 E. 15th St. 279-4200.)

MORNING'S AT SEVEN
A Lincoln Center revival of Paul Osborn's 1939 back-yard drama, starring Elizabeth Franz, Julie Hagerty, Buck Henry, Piper Laurie, Christopher Lloyd, William Biff McGuire, Estelle Parsons, Frances Sternhagen, and Stephen Tobolowsky. Daniel Sullivan is the director. In previews. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

PEARL THEATRE COMPANY
Presenting "Romeo and Juliet" and "Much Ado About Nothing" in repertory. In previews. (80 St. Mark's Pl. 598-9802.)

RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM
The sleight-of-hand artist returns to New York with a new show, directed by David Mamet. In previews. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

SWIMMING WITH WATERMELONS
An American G.I. and a young Japanese woman fall in love in occupied Japan, in a play with music created by Diane Paulus, Randy Weiner, and Project 400. Preview on April 10. Opens April 11 at 8. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 353-0303.)

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
The 1967 movie about a New York City flapper is the basis for a new musical by Dick Scanlan (book and new lyrics), the late Richard Morris (book), and Jeanine Tesori (new songs). Michael Mayer is the director. In previews. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			10	11	12	13
14	15	16				

OPENED RECENTLY

ANDORRA
A Theatre for a New Audience revival of the late Swiss playwright Max Frisch's 1961 parable about anti-Semitism. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

BEA ARTHUR ON BROADWAY: JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS
The stage and screen star performs songs and reminisces about her six-decade career. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes April 14.)

THE CARPETBAGGER'S CHILDREN
Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote, and Roberta Maxwell portray three daughters of a Union soldier, in a new play by Horton Foote. Michael Wilson is the director. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

THE CRUCIBLE
Arthur Miller's reimagining of the Salem witch-hunt of 1692, here in a masterly revival by Richard Eyre, is both a terrific melodramatic yarn that combines love interest and courtroom drama and a cunning allegory for the blacklisting delirium of the House Un-American Activities Committee; it is one of the only theatrical remnants of those craven years. Abigail Williams (the edgy, excellent Angela Bettis), an orphaned seventeen-year-old Puritan, has been seen dancing in the woods trying to cast a spell over the wife (the expert Laura Linney) of her thirty-five-year-old lover and former employer, John Proctor (Liam Neeson, who is a force of nature). Miller demonstrates the hysteric turning herself into an event in order to preserve a sense of goodness and to project her dark, violent, repressed feelings onto others. She becomes the psychological paradigm of the community. Murkiness—the crepuscular gloom of Paul Gallo's lighting—is this production's dominating atmosphere. Shards of light slant through the rough-hewn slabs of wood in Tim Hatley's brooding behemoth set, which contracts to convey the shadowy claustrophobia of Puritan habitation and expands to suggest the monumentality of the stockade. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/18/02.) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

THE DAZZLE
It's probably perfectly natural to worry that the sum of one's existence will end up being nothing more than an awful mess. In the true case of the infamous Collyer brothers, whose decaying bodies were discovered in 1947 buried beneath a lifetime collection of junk, that fear became a reality of phenomenal proportions. The terrific playwright Richard Greenberg has reimagined the brothers' fatal mistake (using love of the world's things, including knowledge, as a shield against the more painful love of humanity) with mixed results. His play is extremely long on longueurs (in the end, neurotics are actually pretty boring), but thanks to fine performances by the heretofore underrated Reg Rogers, as a concert pianist, and Peter Frechette, as his protective lawyer brother, it has numerous moments of funny-sad clarity. (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100.)

DOM JUAN
A new translation of Molière's play, written and directed by Alex Roe. (Metropolitan Playhouse, 220 E. 4th St. 995-5302. Closes May 5.)

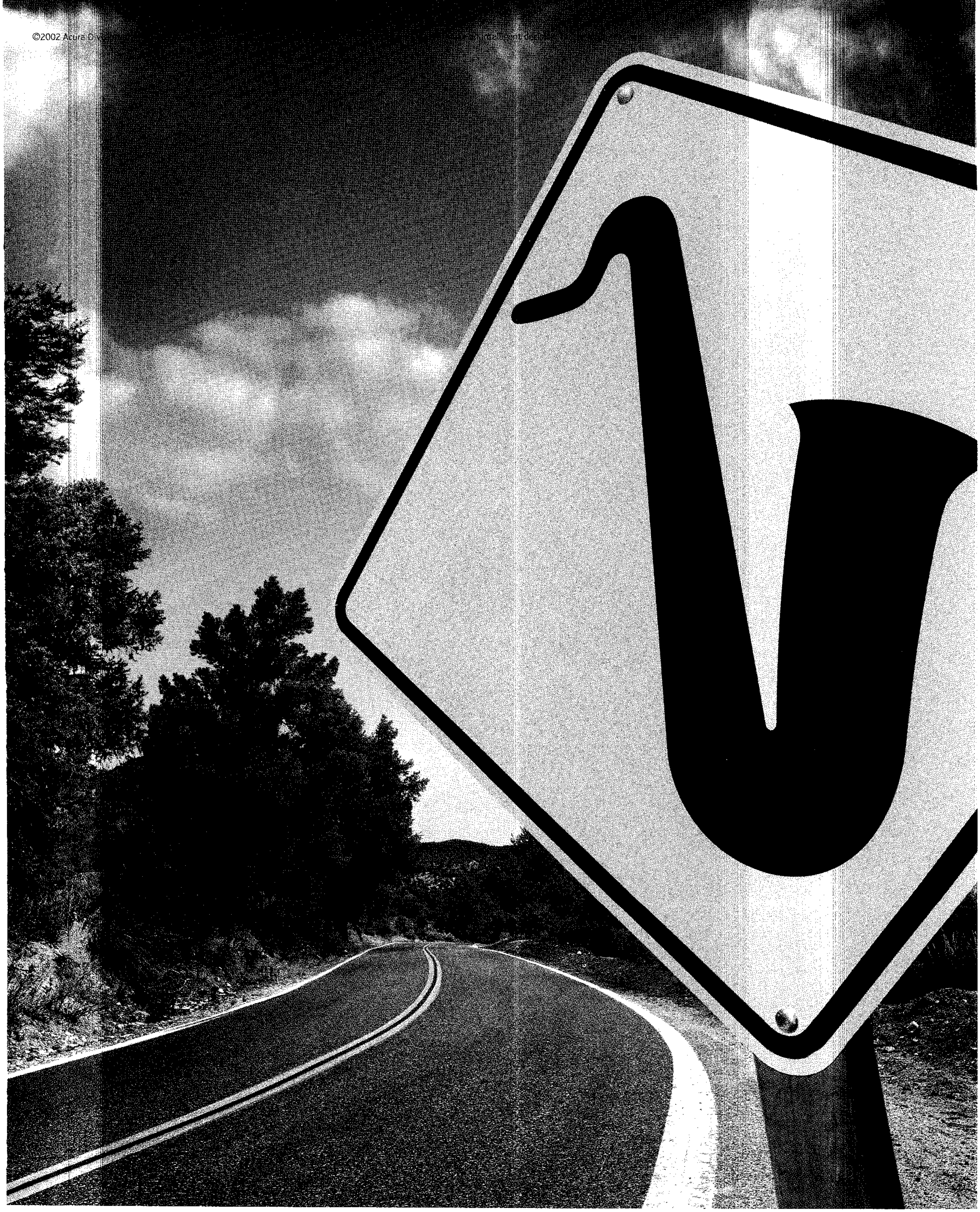
ELAINE STRITCH AT LIBERTY
In her extraordinary one-woman show (co-created with *The New Yorker's* theatre critic John Lahr), Stritchie, as Noel Coward called her, once and for all confirms her status as a living legend. As she sings songs and tells tales about the ups and downs of her long life in the theatre, she ends up capturing more than a single lifetime; her show is the synthesis of so much that is rich and rewarding and heartbreaking about life on the stage. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

THE FAB 4 REACH THE PEARLY GATES
A rock band from Liverpool must choose between reincarnation and the afterlife, in a play by the Philadelphia troupe New Paradise Laboratories. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Closes April 14.)

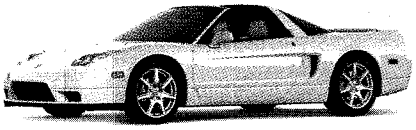
FORTUNE'S FOOL
Turgenev's comedy, starring Alan Bates and Frank Langella. Arthur Penn is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

FRANNY'S WAY
In Richard Nelson's latest play, staged by Playwrights Horizons, two teen-age sisters make a trip to Greenwich Village in 1957. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 279-4200. Closes April 14.)

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?
Left to his own devices, without society's rules or the superego's tyrannical eye, homo sapiens would shtup mud. Or so Edward Albee contends in his ninety-minute anecdote about a happily married, successful architect who falls in love with a goat called Sylvia. It takes all of Albee's expertise to tease this joke into an evening; but it allows Mercedes Ruehl some hilarious moments of high dudgeon as she trashes the house and her husband for "cruising livestock." The



©2002 Acura Div [illegible]



A Proud Sponsor of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. ACURA

APRIL 26 THROUGH MAY 5, 2002

"The Underpants," Steve Martin's adaptation of the Carl Sternheim comedy, at Classic Stage Company.

sex happens offstage, alas; if Mr. Albee had put his special pleading for bestiality in front of the paying customers, they'd be getting something for their top dollar. David Esbjornson is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GODFADDA WORKOUT
A one-man show written and performed by Seth Isler. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

THE GRADUATE
From London's West End, Terry Johnson's adaptation of the 1967 film, starring Kathleen Turner, Jason Biggs, and Alicia Silverstone. Mr. Johnson is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GUYS
In Anne Nelson's play, an editor (Swoosie Kurtz) helps a fire chief (Tim Robbins) write eulogies for the funerals of eight men from his company, who were killed in the September 11th attacks. Jim Simpson is the director. (The Flea, 41 White St. 206-1515.)

HELEN
Tony Kushner directs Ellen McLaughlin's modern interpretation of the plight of Helen of Troy. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200. Closes April 21.)

KILT
A young man travels to Scotland for his grandfather's funeral and secrets are revealed, in a play written by Jonathan Wilson and directed by Jack Hofsiss. (The Directors Company, 311 W. 43rd St. 206-1515.)

KISS SHOT
A musical comedy by Jim Neu and Neal Kirkwood, set in a futuristic film-noir-influenced Los Angeles. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

THE LAST FIVE YEARS
This new work by the composer Jason Robert Brown ("Parade") is not really a musical per se (it has no book to speak of); it's a song cycle of charming, often funny, but not terribly memorable tunes that trace the five-year relationship of a young New York City couple. The super-talented Norbert Leo Butz and Sherie René Scott do everything in their admirable power to bring the characters into sharp focus. But Brown has made the pair less than three-dimensional, and the audience knows from the outset that they're going to part, so there's not much here in the way of surprises. Daisy Prince is the director. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

MAMMA MIA!
This smorgasbord of song, the brainchild of Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, the male half of the seventies supergroup ABBA, is nothing but hokum—a chucklehead pleasure. Catherine Johnson's book, which is simply a slick cartoon, connects the dots between the band's No. 1 singles. (11/5/01) (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 563-5544.)

MARIA DEL BOSCO
(SEX & RACING CARS: A SOUND OPERA)
The avant-garde playwright Richard Foreman's fiftieth play. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650. Closes April 27.)

METAMORPHOSES
In Ovid's tales, loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods in a swimming pool, water is life; it calls up associations with the unconscious, the primordial ooze, birth, and sex. The elegant, surreal playfulness of the stage picture broadcasts the tone of Zimmerman's deft direction and her vernacular reinventions. It's fun and full of wonder. But Zimmerman's charming cartoons illustrate rather than dramatize psychic struggle. Because of her scenic prowess, Zimmerman pulls the show off without getting it quite right. The swimming pool, which is the show's gimmick, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. (3/18/02) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

MISS EVERS' BOYS
David Feldshuh's drama, inspired by experiments that the U.S. Public Health Service performed on black men from the thirties through the seventies to determine the effects of untreated syphilis. (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 279-4200. Closes April 14.)

MISTER
Anthony Rapp portrays an inner-city schoolteacher who is accused of murder, in a new musical by Tony Vellela (book and lyrics) and Misha Piatigorsky (score). (Present Company Theatorium, 196-98 Stanton St. 420-8877.)

MR. GOLDWYN
As an exercise in hagiography, this play about the Hollywood mogul and legendary maestro of the malaprop, written by Marsha Lebby and John Lollos, makes A&E's "Biography" look edgy. The year is 1952. The movies are under siege from television; the industry is under investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee, and, against all the odds, Samuel Goldwyn (Alan King), who at seventy-one is still a force to be reckoned with, is in the midst of pulling into a final cinematic inside straight with "Hans Christian Andersen." But, even in this tempest-tossed time, the writers manage to hit only still water. The show has no dramatic trajectory, no psychological insight, and no second act. (3/25/02) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

NECESSARY TARGETS
In Eve Ensler's new play, a New York psychiatrist (Shirley Knight) goes to Bosnia in 1995 to help treat

WILLAMAIN SOMMA

CHECK IN FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR VERY OWN SCHEDULE.

Print your boarding pass at nwa.com Check-In℠ from almost anywhere.
As the first major network carrier to offer Internet check-in, we've made flying easier and more convenient than ever. Visit us for details at www.nwa.com/checkin.

NORTHWEST
AIRLINES

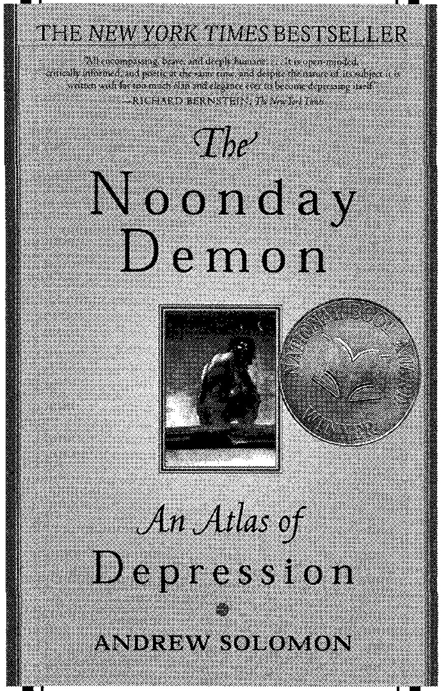
WORLDWIDE KLM

©2002 Northwest Airlines, Inc.

NOW IN PAPERBACK

The National Book
Award winner
from

ANDREW
SOLOMON


THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
—RICHARD BERNSTEIN, The New York Times
The Noonday Demon
An Atlas of Depression
ANDREW SOLOMON

"All encompassing, brave
and deeply humane."
—Richard Bernstein,
The New York Times

"Amazingly rich
and absorbing."
—William Styron, author of
Darkness Visible and *Sophie's Choice*

"Smart, lucid, and
intensely moving."
—David Gates, *Newsweek*

"Elegantly written,
meticulously researched."
—Christine Whitehouse, *Time*

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM SIMON & SCHUSTER AUDIO

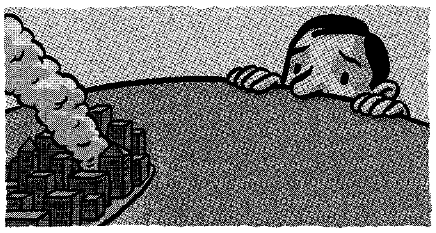
TOUCHSTONE
A Division of Simon & Schuster
A VIACOM COMPANY

www.simonsays.com

BOOK CURRENTS

The View from Abroad

Behind the national tragedy of last September's terrorist attacks lay a puzzle of global proportions; a new set of books from the foreign press is helping us piece it all together. The German weekly magazine *Der Spiegel,* whose editorial offices are in Hamburg, was uniquely positioned to report on the safe houses, cells, and mosques that bred the terrorists. **INSIDE 9-11: WHAT REALLY HAPPENED** (St. Martin's), a reconstruction by the magazine's staff translated by Paul DeAngelis and Elisabeth Kaestner, offers accounts of the terrorists' whereabouts from as early as 1992, stories of improbable escape, and the horrifying flatness of the F.D.N.Y. emergency log: "Female caller reports they are trapped in the elevator . . . explains they are dying."



CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Winston Churchill testified to the editorial independence of the BBC when he called it "the enemy within the gates." **THE BBC REPORTS ON AMERICA, ITS ALLIES AND ENEMIES, AND THE COUNTERATTACK ON TERRORISM** (Overlook), edited by Jenny Baxter and Malcolm Downing, upholds that tradition, with essays from an editor who travelled with Tony Blair on his diplomatic mission last fall, a broadcaster whose grandmother was an I.R.A. arms smuggler, and a Jerusalem-based correspondent who writes that after September 11th, the U.S. "became a part of the Middle East."

Al-Jazeera, the Qatari cable station, has been called the Arab CNN and denounced as a mouthpiece for Osama bin Laden, but its roots are pure BBC: state funding, editorial independence, reporters inherited from a defunct Arabic division of the Beeb. **AL-JAZEERA** (Westview), by two expatriate Egyptian professors, Mohammed el-Nawawy and Abdel Iskandar, tells of the reassuringly controversial place the news outlet occupies in the Arab world.

—*Dana Goodyear*

the women at a refugee camp. She has arrived with all the wrong clothes and with little preparation (she thinks people in Bosnia speak Bosnian). At first, she is undone by the demands of the situation, and then is remade by what those demands bring out in her. Working with her is a tough young trauma counsellor (Catherine Kellner), who is writing a book about people in trouble spots around the world and is a one-dimensional stand-in for all cold-hearted journalists who are interested only in the story, not in the people telling it. The play proceeds predictably, but Knight makes her character's transformation moving. (3/11/02) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

NOISES OFF
Jeremy Sams's revival of Michael Frayn's 1982 backstage comedy, a farce within an antic farce, is blissful fun. As the dysfunctional troupe of the travelling show "Nothing On," all the members of the excellent cast shine in roles that lesser comedians would surely find daunting. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

OKLAHOMA!
There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's award-winning version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set, which immediately submerges us in a gorgeous world of folk innocence. But in the show's retranslation to its natural Broadway habitat, technique, which can make the show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. The issue of cultural chemistry comes into play: an emotional lopsidedness has become evident, particularly in the casting. Americans are a sort of mutant breed, whose optimism is a sure sign of emotional aberration. The English are constitutionally unable to fathom it. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

QED
Peter Parnell's play, starring Alan Alda as the physicist Richard Feynman, buzzes with life. Set in 1986—the year of the Challenger explosion, whose causes Feynman helped to investigate—"QED" takes us through an afternoon and evening in Feynman's office at Caltech, where he talks about such subjects as photons, drumming, the Manhattan Project, cancer, and "South Pacific." Alda's performance, which makes much use of that scrunchy-eyed smile of his, is one of utter charm. Sundays and Mondays only. (11/26/01) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

SMELL OF THE KILL
Michele Lowe's comedy involves three wives, their three unloving husbands, and a meat locker. Christopher Ashley is the director. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SURVIVING GRACE
A play by Trish Vradenburg, about a fraught mother-and-daughter relationship. Illeana Douglas and Doris Belack star. Jack Hofsiss directs. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-7171.)

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS
This new musical, adapted from the excellent Clifford Odets–Ernest Lehman movie (1957) by a high-powered artistic team headed by the director Nicholas Hytner, is pitched at a level of ambition comparable to its subject's. The notion of New York as a playground was propagated by Broadway's gossip columnists, and especially by Walter Winchell, whose insatiable, driven personality makes him perfect material for the Broadway musical and who was the inspiration for the character J. J. Hunsecker (played by the expert John Lithgow). At first glance, "Sweet Smell" seems to have got it right. Bob Crowley's behemoth gray skyscrapers loom over the stage, turning it into a kind of concrete canyon that resounds with the echo of rumor. John Guare, who wrote the book, has a clear bead on the material's potent mixture of comic and craven. Unfortunately, the wit of the book is not sustained in Marvin Hamlisch's soft, undistinguished score and Craig Carnelia's flat lyrics. (3/25/02) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

TALK
In Carl Hancock Rux's play, staged by the Foundry Theatre, the life of a late black writer from the Beat era is explored by a panel of literati

who knew him. Marion McClinton is the director. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 800-965-4827.)

36 VIEWS
Naomi Iizuka's drama about the discovery of a priceless Japanese pillow book and its effects on the academic art community. Directed by Mark Wing-Davey. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

3 DARK TALES
The international company Theatre O's "tragicomedy in three movements." (45 Bleecker Street Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. 307-4100.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG
The Public Theatre's production of Suzan-Lori Parks's play has moved to Broadway, starring Jeffrey Wright and Mos Def. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

THE UNDERPANTS
Carl Sternheim's 1910 comedy, newly adapted by Steve Martin. Barry Edelstein is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

WHAT THE HELL'S YOUR PROBLEM: AN EVENING WITH DR. BOB NATHELSON
Tom Noonan's latest play, about a television self-help guru whose books include "You Made Your Parents Hate You." (Paradise, 64 E. 4th St. 206-1515.)

LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.

BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.

CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200.

CHICAGO
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)
Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.

CONTACT
Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.

42ND STREET
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.

THE FULL MONTY
Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.

LOVE, JANIS
Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.

PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

THE PRODUCERS
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.

PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.

RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.

STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.

THE SYRINGA TREE
Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 307-4100.

THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.

TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.

UNDERNEATH THE LINTEL
Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St.

URINETOWN
Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

DANCE

EIFMAN BALLET OF ST. PETERSBURG
April 10-11 at 8: "The Karamazovs." ♦ April 12 at 8, April 13 at 2 and 8, and April 14 at 2 and 7: "Pinocchio." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

ELIOT FELD'S BALLET TECH
Eliot Feld isn't exactly sure how many people are in the cast of "Lincoln Portrait," his magnum opus this season. But, at a minimum of fifty-five—including the security guard from downstairs, an elderly hatmaker, and a potentially squalling baby—and with each clad in the styles of a different American era all the way back to Lincoln, it's enough to remind us, Feld says, "what an interesting experiment America is. This is not Sweden—or Kosovo. As imperfectly as we jujitsu our differences, they work in our favor." The bulk of the cast walks, stops, and clumps together to Aaron Copland's broad strokes and the Great Emancipator's urgent words while thirteen dancers form simple folk-dance circles and chains. Three additional premières and works from the repertory complete the season. April 9 at 8: "Contra Pose," "Yo Johann," "Lincoln Portrait," and "Pacific Dances." ♦ April 10 at 8: "Straw Hearts," "Behold the Man," and "Doo Dah Day." ♦ April 11 and April 16 at 8: "Clave," "Pianola," "At Midnight," and "Paper Tiger." ♦ April 12 at 8: "Theatre," "Pacific Dances," and "Juke Box." ♦ April 13 at 8: "Ah Scarlatti," "Ion," "Mending," and "Skandia." ♦ April 14 at 2: "Straw Hearts," "Behold the Man," and "Pacific Dances." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through May 5.)

"SECRETO Y MALIBU"
In this evening-length work, two odd women named Secreto and Malibu invent their own wild, windy world on the patio of a farmhouse in the middle of nowhere. "They probably have one cow and one tree and a lot of yellow sand," according to the Argentine director-choreographer Diana Szeinblum. "It's very empty." Their means of invention are a standing fan, a mound of dirt, and a style of movement so abrupt and free that its sexiness is almost scary. (Dance Theatre Workshop at the Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 924-0077. April 11-13 at 8.)

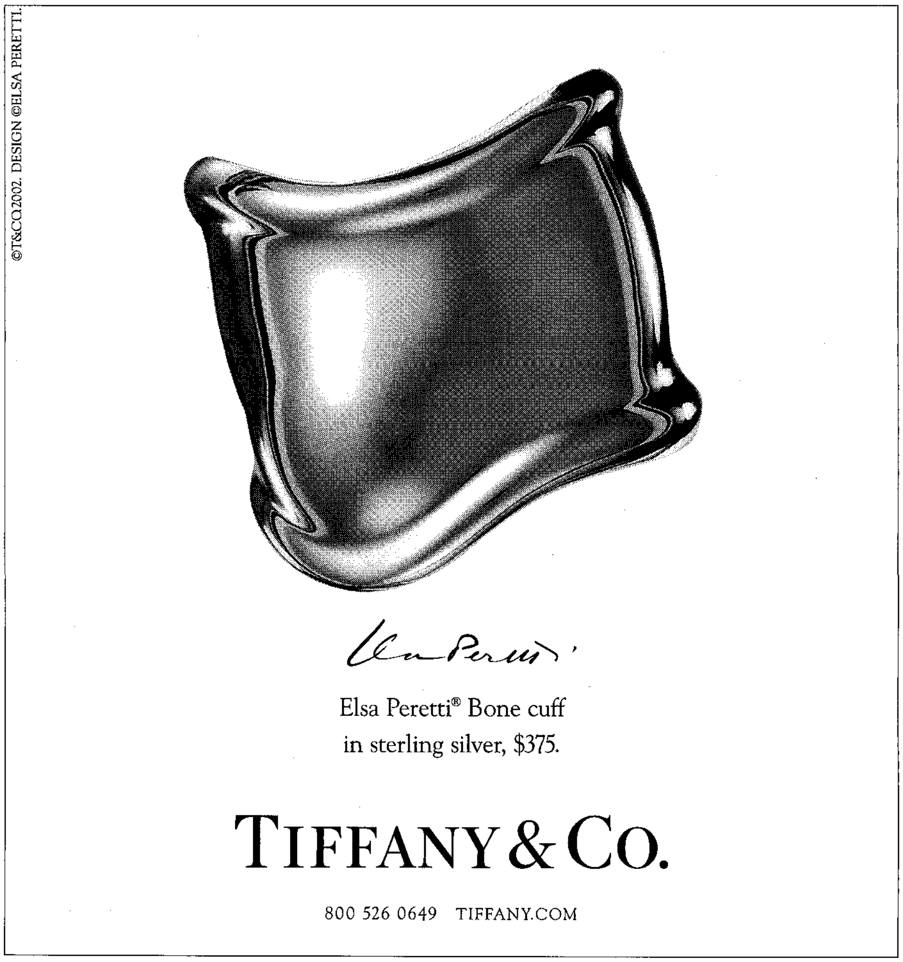
"LUCINDA CHILDS: SOLOS"
The minimalist presents three solos. The first, "Dance #4," from 1979, features a Philip Glass score and a film by Sol LeWitt. "Description (of a Description)," from 2000, is set to a text by Susan Sontag. The final work, "Underwater," was created in collaboration with Glass and Robert Wilson. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. April 10-13 at 8. Through April 20.)

"AFTER PIECE"
Four works by the choreographer Pam Tanowitz, including the title piece, for four women, as well as "Informal," which features the New York City Ballet soloist Tom Gold, "Monument (for Viola)," and "Swan Song Once Removed." (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. April 11-14 at 8:30.)

GREGORY HINES
The triple-threat tap dancer. (Whitman Theatre, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College. 718-951-4500. April 13 at 8.)

COMPANY APPELS
The six-member troupe premières "Heat Lightning," set to a text written by the choreographer Jonathon Appels. (Rose Building, Lincoln Center. 410-4243. April 9-11 at 8.)

PILOBOLUS DANCE THEATRE
In honor of the Diné (or Navajo) sand painter Walking Thunder, who will be giving lecture demonstrations April 11-21, the Connecticut-based company performs the twenty-minute piece she inspired. (National Museum of the American Indian, 1 Bowling Green. No reservations necessary for the performance, which is free. April 11 at 6, April 12 at 2, and April 13-14 at 2 and 4.)


©T&CO.2002. DESIGN ©ELSA PERETTI.

Elsa Peretti® Bone cuff
in sterling silver, $375.

TIFFANY & CO.

800 526 0649 TIFFANY.COM

DANCES PATRELLE
The company under the direction of Francis Patrelle premières "Pop," which follows several couples through New Year's Eve celebrations in the thirties, forties, and fifties. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 11 at 7, April 12 at 8, and April 13 at 2 and 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER
The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra deserves resounding applause for turning the spotlight on Woody Herman, a stalwart bandleader who kept his mighty and ever-evolving aggregations on the road decades after the end of the swing era. Joe Lovano, one of the Herman band's great saxophone alumni, is one of the guest soloists. (Alice Tully Hall, 721-6500. April 11 and April 13 at 8.)

"SUGAR HILL REVISITED"
The fearless clarinettist Don Byron (he once presented a program linking the music of Henry Mancini and Sly Stone) goes old school with an exploration of the works of Grandmaster Flash, the Sugarhill Gang, and other hip-hop standard-bearers who recorded on the seminal Sugar Hill Records. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. April 12 at 8.)

"JAZZ COMPOSER PORTRAITS"
This series, led by pianist Eric Reed, has focussed on worthy obscurities including Elmo Hope and James Black. Now Reed and friends train their sights on a bona-fide heavyweight: Eric Dolphy. The dazzling saxophonist, flutist, clarinettist, and composer formed a vital link between the mainstream and the burgeoning avant-garde of the early sixties; his untimely death, in 1964, robbed music of untold innovations. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 12 at 8.)

PAT METHENY GROUP
Although this isn't your older brother's Pat Metheny Group—the trumpeter Cuong Vu, the vocalist Richard Bona, and a new drummer have joined the longtime bandmates Lyle Mays on keyboards and Steve Rodby on bass—this most popular of the guitarist's many bands is also one of his most lightweight. Those drawn to Metheny's experimental leanings and his acute jazz improvising might want to think twice before going. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 12-13 at 8.)

"GREAT AFRICAN BALL"
Youssou N'Dour, a longtime favorite of the world-music community and a pioneer of *mbalax*, the hip-shaking music based on the Wolof *sabar* percussion of his native Senegal, brings in his fourteen-piece Super Étoile band for two long nights of singing and dancing. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 307-7171. April 12-13, from 10 to dawn.)

"ZERO CHURCH"
This performance takes its title from the latest release by Suzzy and Maggie Roche, of the legendary folk trio the Roches. A collection of prayers set to music, the album, replete with dark-tinged chord progressions and harmonies, forms the basis for a multidisciplinary interpretation here. Dancers, mimes, and puppets bolster the efforts of the sisters and their backing musicians. (St. Ann's Warehouse, 38 Water St., Brooklyn. 718-858-2424. April 12-13 at 8 and April 14 at 4.)

WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE
April 13: Bringing prodigious chops and serious mirth to klezmer, the clarinettist David Krakauer and his excitable Klezmer Madness band can turn a concert into what seems like an avant-garde Jewish wedding celebration. He's a local treasure, not to be missed. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. For more information, call 545-7536. April 13 at 8.)

DAVE MATTHEWS BAND
The onetime fraternity-row favorite spirals ever skyward, spreading jam rock beyond the Hacky Sack circles of the nation's college campuses. Thanks to dedicated fans, the D.M.B. has achieved global prominence. (Madison Square Garden. 307-7171. April 15-16 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—April 16: With unparalleled control over the turntable, the **X-Ecutioners**, the New York scratch crew of Mista Sinista, Rob Swift, Total Eclipse, and Roc Raida, cut, mix, and beat-juggle everything from classic soul to contemporary rock tracks into wholly new compositions. Expect crowd-pumping beats, blazing-fast fingers, and an old-school vibe of animated awe. For those who might want to try this at home, pick up their latest album, "Built from Scratch." With the **Coup**, the Bay Area hip-hop group known for its uncompromisingly polemical lyrics. In the news last year for a sickeningly unfortunate coincidence (the original cover of the group's new album, "Party Music," showed lead vocalist Boots blowing up the World Trade Center with a detonator), the Coup will almost certainly deliver a mix of props and propaganda.

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—April 12: **Robyn Hitchcock** has often been written off as a Syd Barrett disciple with a fondness for acid-damaged surrealism, but the perennial cult favorite is a brilliant popsmith and an accomplished songwriter. Thanks to a penchant for flagrant Dadaist silliness, Hitchcock—hot on the heels of a successful reunion tour with the punky psychedelic band the Soft Boys—is a hilarious marvel to witness onstage. The opening act is the **Howard Fishman** quartet. The guitarist and gravel-voiced singer Fishman continues his storybook journey from subway musician to cabaret sensation to aspiring rock musician. His band's latest release, which features for the first time drums, electric guitars, and the like, is called, appropriately enough, "Do What I Want."

"The Fab 4 Reach the Pearly Gates," at P.S. 122 (see Theatre).

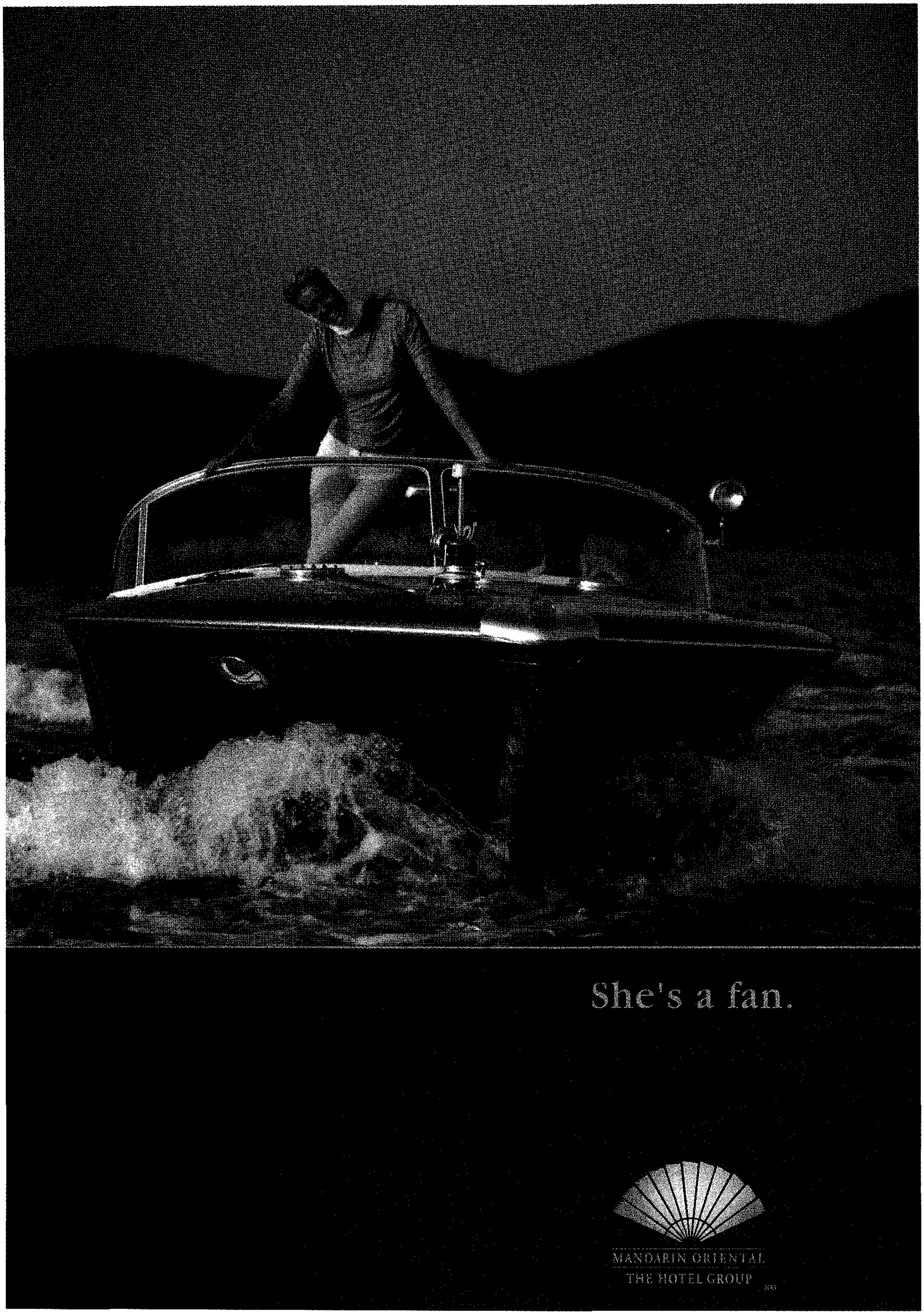
ALISON SEIFFER

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—April 14-15: What happens when a Dublin-born singer meets up with a Southern Californian skateboard legend who likes to play the accordion? Throw in some fiddles, drums, bass, bodhran, bouzouki, and electric guitars and you end up with **Flogging Molly**, a Los Angeles-based Celtic punk band that'll make up for every time Shane MacGowan ever let you down.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—April 11: **Billy Bragg**, the blue-collar bard from Barking, England, stops by with his band, the Blokes. After spending the past half-decade or so working with songs written by Woody Guthrie, Bragg returns with a new album of original material, "England, Half English." His earnest politics haven't changed much, but his style is evolving—the new record has touches of ska, reggae, and Eastern European folk music. April 13: The **Yonder Mountain String Band**, hailing from Nederland, Colorado, offers a night of contemporary bluegrass. April 15: The ambitious and hirsute **Andrew W.K.** is a perpetually sweaty and occasionally bloody young man who seeks to make his raw-knuckled guitar blitzkrieg accessible to a wide pop-loving audience. By sprucing up such gloriously lowbrow anthems as "Party Hard," "Party 'Til You Puke," and, believe it or not, "It's Time to Party" with incongruously cheesy keyboard fills, W.K. injects a welcome bit of light and humor into today's otherwise adrenalized, testosterone-heavy nü-metal scene.

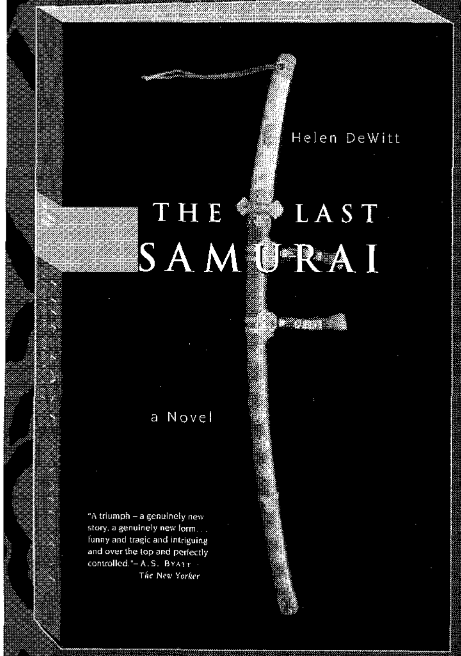
JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—April 10-11: **Youssou N'Dour** (see Concerts—"Great African Ball") settles in for a pair of rare acoustic dates.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—April 11: Beatfest, a four-day celebration of bongos, black berets, and endless road trips, gets under way with poetry and music by **Ursula Rucker, Tracie Morris,** and **DJ Logic.** April 12: The perpetually angry young man **Graham Parker** per-


She's a fan.
MANDARIN ORIENTAL
THE HOTEL GROUP
SM

Find out why Elle Macpherson is a fan at www.mandarinoriental.com **ASIA-PACIFIC** • BANGKOK • HONG KONG • JAKARTA KUALA LUMPUR • MACAU • MANILA • SINGAPORE • SURABAYA **EUROPE** • GENEVA • LONDON • MUNICH **USA** • HAWAII • MIAMI • NEW YORK • SAN FRANCISCO

THE "BRILLIANT DEBUT NOVEL"*
now in paperback



THE LAST SAMURAI
HELEN DEWITT

"A triumph—a genuinely new story, a genuinely new form...funny and tragic and intriguing and over the top and perfectly controlled." —A. S. Byatt, *The New Yorker*

"Crisp and vivid...*The Last Samurai* may be the find of the season." —Sven Birkerts, *The Boston Globe*

"Exhilaratingly literate.... Ms. DeWitt joins Dave Eggers, Zadie Smith, and Michael Chabon in going to the head of this year's class of flamboyantly ambitious novelists whose adventurousness spins out on an epic scale." —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

"A joy to read." —**The Washington Post Book World*

Available wherever books are sold
talk miramax books

for the discriminating vacationer...
a commitment to excellence
Kiawah Island
Rentals and Sales
Pam Harrington Exclusives
http://www.kiawahexclusives.com
1-800-845-6966

Undiscovered Italy
Villa Rentals
from the Alps to the vineyards, from the hill towns to the sea
THE PARKER COMPANY FREE CATALOG
www.theparkercompany.com 800-280-2811

PENDLETON
Cowgirl Collection™
Historic PhotoArt Prints
www.cowgirlcompany.com

100's of day trips in Italy
For a vacation experience you'll always savor, visit us on the Web. On-line booking.
ACTIVIDAYZ
www.actividayz.com
www.actividayz.com

forms solo. The singer-songwriter **Jim Roll** opens. His remarkable new album, "Inhabiting the Ball," features lyrics by the writers Denis Johnson and Rick Moody. April 13: **Amiri Baraka** and **Carl Hancock Rux** set their verses to music with the help of **DJ Spooky.** April 14: The wandering country-rock rebel **Steve Earl** unplugs for a solo acoustic show and reading.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL
59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through April 29: If **Dave Frishberg** didn't write such clever songs he'd be better known as a pianist (his sly, offhand piano turns are as sharp as his wit). But then we wouldn't have such gems as "My Attorney Bernie," "Van Lingle Mungo" (a sports paean with lyrics comprised of vintage baseball players' names), or "Peel Me a Grape," his not quite feminist anthem, which is presumably bringing him handsome royalties thanks to Diana Krall. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through April 14: This gathering of strange bedfellows, featuring the drummer **Joey Baron,** the alto saxophonist **Arthur Blythe,** the bassist **Ron Carter,** and the guitarist **Bill Frisell,** is sure to find comfort in the funky side of things, which could be a lot of fun.

CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters and wraparound murals. Through April 13: The Broadway baby **Melissa Errico,** who's gone from a teen-age Cosette in "Les Misérables" to a lead in an upcoming Kennedy Center production of "Sunday in the Park with George," offers a program of works by Stephen Sondheim, Michel Legrand, Randy Newman (a specialty of hers, as it turns out), and others. The pianist Lee Musiker, the dean of accompanists, lends a hand.

FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY
540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—Through April 20: The vocalist **Lillias White,** who walked off with a Tony and a slew of other prestigious theatre awards in 1997 for her star turn in "The Life," was most recently heard in the concert version and subsequent recording of "Dreamgirls." For this engagement, the natural performer presents a program of Broadway and jazz standards, backed by the blue-chip support of the pianist James Williams, the bassist Ron Carter, and the drummer Grady Tate. Dining.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—Through April 14: The persistent criticism that he's never found his way out of the looming shadow of Miles Davis obviously just rolls off trumpeter **Wallace Roney's** back. At this homage to the late, great innovator, Roney surrounds himself with Davis vets, including the saxophonist **Gary Bartz,** the drummer **Lenny White,** and the bassist **Buster Williams,** in addition to the splendid pianist **Geri Allen,** the leader's wife. Mondays belong to the electric-guitarist **Les Paul.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Through April 14: **Bill Charlap's** new album, "Stardust," leans heavily on such guests as Tony Bennett, Shirley Horn, Jim Hall, and Frank Wess, but the pianist is the center of attention at this engagement. Working in lockstep with the bassist **Peter Washington** and the drummer **Kenny Washington,** Charlap displays the poise and taste, if not yet the inner depth, of such stylists as Tommy Flanagan and Hank Jones. Dining.

SMOKE
2751 Broadway, between 105th and 106th Sts. (864-6662)—April 12-13: The **George Coleman** quartet. Although he's a New York institution—when has he not been around?—the saxophonist Coleman is actually a proud son of Memphis, Tennessee; he's part of the nineteen-fifties jazz community that included Booker Little and Phineas Newborn. Coleman, whose tenor speaks an authentic, harmonically complex dialect that mates Southern grit with bebop finesse, put in some accomplished but strangely undervalued

Andrew W.K. performs at Irving Plaza this week.

MICHAEL CRAWFORD

work with Max Roach and Miles Davis before branching out on his own some three decades ago. He's a vital link to a time when jazz giants still strode the earth.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through April 14: The **Steve Wilson** quartet. Having come through on the substantial promise he showed with, among many others, Leon Parker and Chick Corea, the decorous alto saxophonist and flute player Steve Wilson has elbowed past trustworthy-sideman status straight into the big leagues. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—**"Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence."** The aptly titled show features forty-one sumptuous examples of magnificence woven between 1420 and 1560, including "The Unicorn Defends Itself," from the Met's own Cloisters, along with three panels from the ten-part "Acts of the Apostles," designed by Raphael for the Sistine Chapel, and all four sections of the "Alba Passion" cycle, shown together here for the first time since 1877. Much can be learned about fifteenth-century weaving technology (a skilled craftsman working in the finest silks and metal-wrapped threads might complete half a square yard per month) and the similarities of Netherlandish and Italian styles. But nothing can compare to the iris-hued and opalescent shimmer of the tapestries themselves, which seem one with the myths and fabulous figures they so often illustrate. Through June 19. ♦ **"Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy."** Virtually the only woman painter among the fraternity of Renaissance Old Masters, Artemisia Gentileschi has inspired novels, films, and a current play, thanks in part to speculation about her romantic misfortunes. She was a painter of great and often grisly refinement, as this dual survey makes clear. Like Caravaggio, who inspired their realist style, the Gentileschis didn't skimp on skin, gold, velvet, or violence; Artemisia's depiction of Judith modelling a low-cut blue gown as she beheads a struggling Holofernes is a cleavage picture in both senses. Through May 12. ♦ **"Surrealism: Desire Unbound."** Through May 5. ♦ **"Earthly Bodies: Irving Penn's Nudes, 1949-50."** Through April 21. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—**"The Russian Avant-Garde Book"** proves that you can judge a book by its cover. The museum showcases a recent windfall of books from the Russian avant-garde. (Three hundred of the eleven hundred volumes donated by the Judith Rothschild Foundation are on view.) The exhibition opens with early collaborations between poets and Futurist painters, such as Mayakovsky and Malevich, whose book "Patriotic Placards" was produced during the First World War. (Most of this early work is highly experimental, such as "Tango with Cows," whose pages are printed on wallpaper.) The show winds up in the thirties, when Constructivist artists including Rodchenko and Lissitzky lent their skills to Soviet propaganda. The dynamic designs—tanks and troops in star formation, myriad hands raised in diagonal salute—are compelling enough to make you whistle the "Internationale" and other red-diaper tunes. Through May 2. ♦ **"Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting."** Gerhard Richter has worked in many styles since 1961, when he escaped from East Germany. They include mordant variations on Pop art, hauntingly beautiful Photo-Realist paintings in several genres, abstracts that convey self-doubt with panache, and a fifteen-canvas masterpiece of history painting, about the deaths in 1977 of Baader-Meinhof terrorists who had convulsed Germany for a decade. Previously seen piecemeal here, his art has struck many as tricky and cold, but it turns out that it aches with emotion. Richter's love of painting, in a tense relationship with his fierce skepticism, generates sustained intellectual drama with regular bonuses of rapture. This show may redraw the map of painting's place in the wider culture. Through May 21. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—After the black walls and visual cacophony of the Brazilian extravaganza that precedes it, Rachel Whiteread's massive sculptural installation fills the museum's top-floor galleries like a silent lament. Whiteread has cast the interior of her London studio and home, a fifties-era building that previously served as a synagogue and a warehouse. The resulting behemoth, which invokes both the sacred and the mundane, is devoid of architectural detail, except for the occasional heating duct or electrical outlet. The effect is at once obdurate and illusory. Through June 5. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The 2002 Biennial is a vast, pleasant, rather drab affair, made up of predominantly earnest, unambitious works by a hundred and thirteen artists and collaborative teams on four floors of the museum and in Central Park, where you can find a fifty-foot steel elm tree. The show's New Age-ish curator Lawrence R. Rinder declares that today's young American artists crave "some greater role than mere decoration or ironic critique." His Biennial bunch achieves something decidedly lesser, on the whole, with gimmicky audio and computer works, self-indulgent installations, and a great many unsurprising video projections. ("Vita brevis, video longa," one observer remarked.) Serious painting and sculpture are scarce. Momentary relief arrives in the form of memorable pieces by Vija Celmins, Chan Chao, Stephen Dean, and Lorna Simpson. Through May 26. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

THE
NEW YORKER
ONLINE

www.newyorker.com

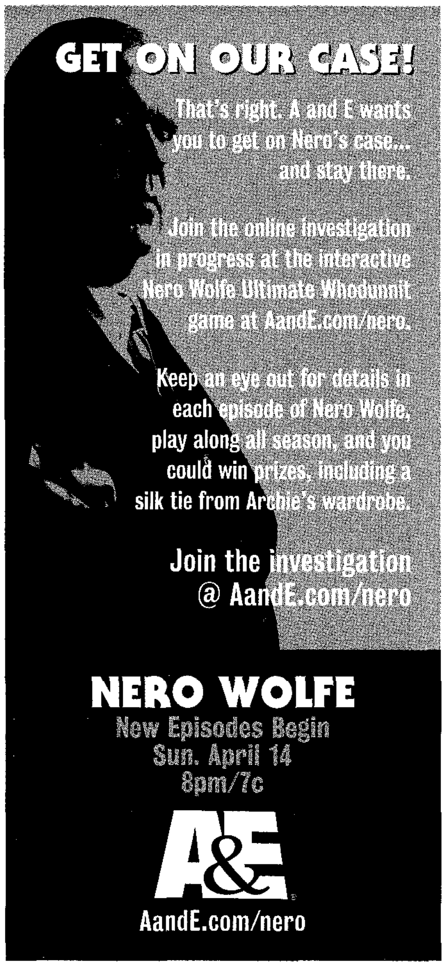
▼

DOZENS OF WEB EXCLUSIVES, INCLUDING:

Calvin Trillin on
WRITING FROM THE STOMACH

PLUS:
Lawrence Wright
Jeffrey Goldberg
Rebecca Mead
Malcolm Gladwell
Alice Munro
Edward Koren
Eavan Boland
V. S. Naipaul
E. L. Doctorow
Lillian Ross
Nicholas Lemann
Paula Fox
W. G. Sebald
Pauline Kael
Philip Gourevitch
Louis Menand
Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
John Cassidy
Barry Blitt
Elizabeth Kolbert
Ken Auletta
and more

AND: A calendar of *New Yorker* events across the country


GET ON OUR CASE!
That's right. A and E wants you to get on Nero's case... and stay there.
Join the online investigation in progress at the interactive Nero Wolfe Ultimate Whodunnit game at AandE.com/nero.
Keep an eye out for details in each episode of Nero Wolfe, play along all season, and you could win prizes, including a silk tie from Archie's wardrobe.
Join the investigation @ AandE.com/nero
NERO WOLFE
New Episodes Begin
Sun. April 14
8pm/7c
A&E
AandE.com/nero

REMEMBER MOTHER'S DAY
FINE ENAMEL FROM STAFFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND
Mother
Actual Size
TRADITIONAL HAND PAINTING TECHNIQUES MAKE THIS A MEANINGFUL EXPRESSION OF YOUR LOVE. $179
DEMPSEY & CARROLL
Stationery Engravers
since 1878
110 EAST 57TH STREET · NEW YORK, NY 10022
www.dempseyandcarroll.com
800-444-4019

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Sensation" this is not: **"Star Wars: The Magic of Myth"** adds many artifacts from the original trilogy (and first prequel) to a well-attended travelling exhibition that opened at D.C.'s National Air and Space Museum in 1997. More than thirty costumed mannequins and models (of Anakin Skywalker's pod racers, of the Imperial Star Destroyer, of Jabba the Hutt's palace) supplement the storyboards and other intergalactic ephemera. Through July 7. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

JEWISH MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—The controversial **"Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art"** is a hash of silly stuff by thirteen mostly young and obscure conceptual artists from eight countries. It should be called "Hi, Hitler." Strenuously naughty tweakings of Nazism—with dopey analogies to childhood, consumerism, and (especially) sex—fall miles short of the show's obvious inspiration, the Broadway rebirth of "The Producers." Just one funny, frightening work has that Brooksian zing: a thirteen-second video that the Israeli artist Boaz Arad created from films of Hitler speaking. Rapid-fire editing makes the Führer say, in stuttering Hebrew, "Hello, Jerusalem, I apologize." At the end, he is glimpsed responding to applause by ducking his head and smoothing his hair, in that self-adoring, epicene way he had. Through June 30. (Open Sundays 10 to 5:45, Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45, and Thursdays, 11 to 8.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

ARSHILE GORKY
Uneasily situated between the war-torn Armenia of his youth and the burgeoning New York art world of the thirties and forties, where he made his career, Gorky is a tragic figure in whom multiple currents mix: traces of early Picasso and mid-period Matisse are visible in these portraits of friends, family, self, and fantasized figures. They're incisive psychological sketches tinged with an abstract angst, but they also emit something of the dire luminosity perfected by Gorky's student Mark Rothko. In particular, the show offers for comparison the two great portraits titled "The Artist and His Mother," iconic studies of Oedipal mourning on which Gorky labored intermittently for a decade. Through April 27. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313.)

NANCY GRAVES
The sculptor Nancy Graves (1939-95) also experimented with paintings and even films. Examples of each medium, made from 1972 through 1994, are on display, along with preparatory drawings for the 1973 film "Aves." All address the age-old fantasy of flight and the almost equally ancient problem of how to render it artfully. The polychromed bronzes and hot, bright paintings look fussy and dated, but "Aves" is wonderful. The tightly choreographed, almost structuralist look at airborne frigate birds and great flamingos (Graves is exacting in her concentration on framing and splicing) also manages to convey soaring lightness and exuberance. Through April 27. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. 794-0550.)

Short List

JAY DE FEO
Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082.
Through May 4.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

OPHRAH SHEMESH
Shemesh's buttery, rosy oils deliver the reliable pleasures of the nude in shameless profusion, even though the severely foreshortened postures, stony stares, and gashlike pudenda of her subjects alert us to the fact that we are not meant to enjoy them without a certain complicity or guilt. But such critical overtones can't save these well-made, handsome, and unremarkable pictures: one more pretty (angry) piece or two in the long history of the genre. Through April 24. (Baumgartner, 418 W. 15th St. 633-2276.)

TABLES FOR TWO

NAM
110 Reade St. (267-1777)—This French-Saigon-style café makes a lot of the city's other Vietnamese spots seem like greasy spoons. On a recent Friday night, subdued groups of multi-culti kids in rock T-shirts and creatively gelled hair were parked beneath slowly spinning ceiling fans. A pair of primly fashionable young Brits made pronouncements about what is and is not "coo-el" about New York (Smith Street, in Brooklyn, is; the men, with their confusing mating rituals, are not) while many of the Tribeca neighborhood's artistic types, complete with their precocious, late-life kids, downed the ultrafresh concoctions that practically fly out of the kitchen, which is run by a trio of talented Vietnamese women.

The most interesting starter is the *ca bam,* chopped seasoned monkfish, seared and served alongside a rice cracker; it looks like a plate of dog kibble and a big brown matzo but is actually pretty addictive. The best is *ca tim nuong,* Asian eggplant, sliced and then grilled just to the point of sweetness and barely seasoned with lime and ginger—a good example of Nam's success through simplicity. There's a fine salad of watercress, tomato, charred onion slices, and rare cubes of tender steak that taste just like the wine-soaked beef tips every respectable American restaurant once served. The *bun cha,* a barbecued-pork-and-noodle dish, however, is dry and wan; the *ga nuong,* advertised as roasted chicken with lime dipping sauce, is a lovely half bird hacked into moist slices with crunchy, garlicky skin—but the sauce turns out to be just more of the sweet-and-sour *nuoc cham,* which is not much to complain about but disappointing if your palate was anticipating something truly limey. Both the crispy red snapper and the steamed sea bass are light but satisfying, and the kitchen makes perfect jasmine and sticky rice to go with it all. Skip dessert and substitute a Vietnamese coffee, a strong brew that drips into a glass with two fingers of sweetened condensed milk. (Open weekdays for lunch and dinner, weekends for dinner only. Entrées $8-$16.)

—Emily Nunn

"FROM THE OBSERVATORY"
The Maurizio Catellan mouse strung above the front desk may be hanging on for dear life, but curator Robert Nickas performs a dazzling high-wire act of his own with this group show of forty-eight works by thirty-five artists spanning four decades. (To quote the Lawrence Weiner text emblazoned across the gallery's façade, there's art "As Far as the Eye Can See.") One prominent theme (and there are several) is reflection, whether in a four-panelled Lichtenstein painting of a mirror, from 1971, or a four-panelled Rorschach blot made of reflective Plexiglas by freshman sculptor Kelley Walker. Through April 20. (Paula Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105.)

"VAPOR"
An exhibition that places Jenny Holzer and Mark Rothko facing each other, while finding room for the ephemeral sculpture of Siobhan Liddell and a series of nineteenth-century silver prints (studies of starry skies made at the Paris Observatory by the Henry Brothers) is aptly titled: what ties these works together is an atmospheric investment in that which

NERO WOLFE

HE'S THE PUNISHMENT THAT FITS THE CRIME.

BLACKMAIL'S A DIRTY BUSINESS, AS DIRTY AS THE BLOND HAIR OF THE QUOTE UNQUOTE DANCER WHO TURNED UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF AN ASHTRAY. I DIDN'T BREAK INTO THAT APARTMENT THAT NIGHT LOOKING FOR A DEAD BODY. BUT I BROKE OUT LOOKING FOR ANSWERS.

WHEN I STARTED POKING AROUND, I SNAGGED ONE JULIE JAQUETTE. JULIE AND THE CORPSE I FOUND THIS MORNING USED TO DANCE TOGETHER WITH AN OUTFIT CALLED THE TEN LITTLE INDIANS. PRETTY CLASSY STUFF. AS CLASSY AS A LEGGY GROUP OF CHORINES EVER IS. BUT THIS ONE WAS DIFFERENT. SHE DIDN'T JUST DANCE, SHE SANG.

JULIE'S DISH STEERED NERO TO SOME IDEAS ABOUT THE KILLER. GIVEN HER CAREER CHOICE, IT WON'T SHOCK YOU THAT JULIE WASN'T TOO SHY TO POSE AS SOME GIRL BAIT. THE SETUP BLEW UP IN A HAIL OF BULLETS. MAYBE THIS BAIT'S TOO GOOD FOR ITS OWN GOOD.

NERO WOLFE ISN'T KNOWN FOR SMALL TALK. WHEN HE'S NOT TALKING ORCHIDS OR ANCHOVIES, HE SAYS THINGS LIKE "VULTUS EST INDEX ANIMI." TO YOU AND ME THAT JUST MEANS "THE FACE IS THE INDEX OF THE MIND." WHATEVER. WOLFE'S FACE IS IN A LANGUAGE I DON'T SPEAK. BUT WHEN HE DOES OPEN HIS MOUTH, THE CASE CLEARS UP FAST. HE KNOWS. HE ALWAYS KNOWS.

NERO WOLFE

New Episodes Begin
Sun. April 14
8pm/7c

A&E®
AandE.com/nero

flickers, evanesces, breathes. Unfortunately, some of curator Donald Moffett's choices are just not strong enough to pull even the requisite immaterial weight. And, while it was a smart idea to include Warhol's 1964 "Empire" in a show about nameless desire and disappearance, careless installation makes the excerpts from the film nearly impossible to see. Through April 20. (Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. 680-9889.)

Short List

JANET CARDIFF AND GEORGE BURES MILLER
Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 206-9100.
Through April 27.

ELIZABETH MURRAY
Pace Wildenstein, 534 W. 25th St. 929-7000.
Through April 27.

GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

ELLEN GALLAGHER
Gallagher's large and serenely disturbing paintings are known for their obsessive doodles of stereotypical racial features: stylized bug eyes, pouty lips, and flips of Betty-and-Veronica white-girl hair. In this series, she goes back to the source, inventively defacing beauty advertisements from back copies of *Ebony* or *Black Stars*, making the wig and skin-cream ads testify against themselves. Eyes are blanked out, tongues lasciviously extended, hair styles altered via cuttings or collage. Gallagher's touch is as delicate as her humor is savage, and it's a treat to see her exercise her skill on the intimate scale of this archival material. Through April 18. (Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166.)

Short List

KIM SOOJA
Blum, 99 Wooster St. 343-0441.
Through May 18.

GALLERIES—BROOKLYN

MARIA LEVITSKY / DAN DEVINE
Levitsky identifies her subject as "the dream-life of buildings"—her dollhouselike sculptures of fantasy interiors and photographs of real abandoned houses admit the cramped and cruddy details at the same time that they acknowledge the pathos of empty rooms. The photographs are captioned with elliptical fragments of text describing damage, as if an insurance investigator had made notes in haiku. Dan Devine's chandelier-shaped sculptures are decorated with dime-store baubles but include tiny video cameras and L.C.D. screens, so that you can look at yourself looking at the work. Through April 22. (Pierogi, 177 N. 9th St., Williamsburg. 718-599-2144.)

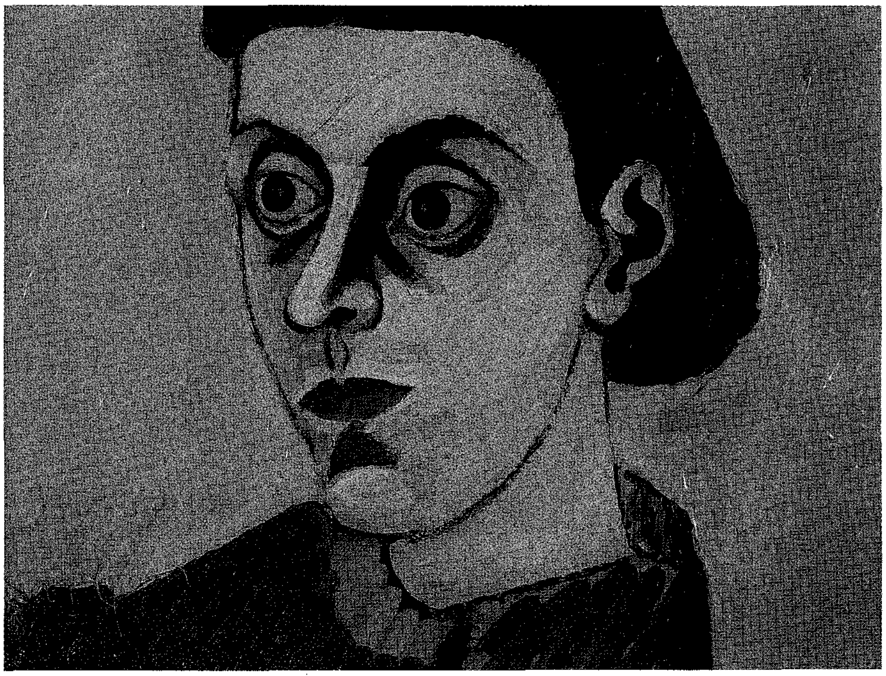
PHOTOGRAPHY

JED DEVINE
This collection of elegant, eclectic black-and-white images comes without titles, dates, or comment. A portrait, a snowy New York landscape, and several studies of the same vase filled with flowers and empty are countered by a cryptic Ed Ruscha-like image of a page of text ("and then what happened?") that somehow manages to remain unpretentious. Through April 20. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

LUCINDA DEVLIN
Devlin, who seems obsessed with secret, sturdy, enclosed places (her most recent work featured electric-chair chambers), now brings her camera into the fantasy rooms of sex hotels. The spaces, called "Pulsations Room" or the "Northern Lights Room," and so on, are completely unsexy, but a lot of the enclosures—spotlit, performance-ready beds, heart-shaped hot tubs—seem pointedly, almost clinically womblike. Her detached view brings just the right amount of humor—which is to say none. She lets the absurdity of a FantaSuite Hotel speak for itself. Through May 11. (Paul Rodgers/9W, 529 W. 20th St. 414-9810.)

DAVID GRAHAM
The reward for making it past the dismal sculpture in the main gallery is a small but spirited show by David Graham. Capturing roadside oddities—big stuff, especially—is what Graham does best: giant sharks, giant Big Boy, giant twin arrows pointing into a deserted lot. While Graham is by no means the first to adopt this vernacular style, his version is irresistible for its charm and vivid color. Through May 4. (Ricco-Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819.)

EVE SONNEMAN
Sonneman has been playing around with the diptych form since 1968 and it shows. Her current work comes off like a bunch of one-glance films. The narrative tendency plays best when set on a beach. In one, a buffoon hops on one leg in the sand behind his impatient wife. A bikini-clad hottie and a scheming older guy miss each other's glances. A tattooed, shirtless tough disrupts the view of some teens hanging out by a cherry-colored Bel Air. In later work, the stories aren't so clear, but she can still make her format dance. Through May 11. (Bruce Silverstein, 504 W. 22nd St. 627-3930.)



Arshile Gorky's "Portrait of Vartoosh," at Gagosian.

MARTIN WEBER
Striking photographs that hover between allegorical narrative and photojournalism. Most of the color photographs in the show were shot in Weber's native Argentina, and one of the most amusing portrays a wizened Peronista in his kitchen dwarfed by tattered posters of Evita and her husband. In a series of small black-and-white pictures shot in Cuba, people hold up a chalkboard to express their heart's desires, including "To marry an American" and, most eloquently, "That our needs don't disturb our dreams." Through April 28. (The Project, 427 W. 126th St. 662-8610.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 857-0000—**"Rise of the Picture Press: Photographic Reportage in Illustrated Magazines, 1918-1939"** and **"Dream Street: W. Eugene Smith's Pittsburgh Photographs."** Through June 16. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

RICHARD MISRACH
Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave., at 25th St. 989-7600.
Through April 27.

LISETTE MODEL
Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. 431-0292.
Through April 27.

WEEGEE
De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. 327-1482.
Through May 17.

See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S
April 10 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: A sale of carpets, including items from Persia, Anatolia, India, and France. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

CHRISTIE'S
April 10 at 10 A.M.: "Important Watches and Wristwatches," featuring items by such makers as Rolex, Audemars Piguet, and Patek Philippe. ♦ April 16 at 10 A.M.: "Important English Furniture, Continental Furniture, Porcelain, and Carpets," the property of a single collector. Among the highlights is a George III ormolu-mounted mahogany commode attributed to William Vile and John Cobb, circa 1760-65. ♦ April 16 at 2: More English furniture. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)

PHILLIPS
The ambitious, upstart auction house, newly reorganized, begins its spring season. April 15 at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30: "Magnificent Jewels." Among the selections are the "Mazarin rubies" (a ruby-and-diamond necklace, from Harry Winston, believed to have been the property of Cardinal Mazarin) and a diamond pendant of more than sixty-five carats (estimated to bring up to two million dollars). ♦ April 15 at 7: Part I of an auction of photographs from the nineteenth century to the present, including works by Andreas Gursky, Margaret Bourke-White, Paul Strand ("Mullein, Maine," a frosty, intimate still-life), Paul Outerbridge ("Saltine Box," estimated to bring up to four hundred thousand dollars), and others. ♦ April 16 at 10:30 A.M.: Part II of the sale, featuring works by Sudek, List, Evans, William Eggleston ("Cadillac Portfo-

lio," thirteen homey images of life on the back roads), and Larry Clark. (3 W. 57th St. 940-1200.)

DOYLE

April 10 at 10 A.M.: An auction of furniture, decorations, paintings, silver, and other items. ◆ April 16 at 10 A.M.: "Important Estate Jewelry," along with watches and objects of virtu. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

SWANN

April 11 at 10:30 A.M.: "Autographs," a sale of letters and documents relating to prominent figures in politics, science, and the arts. In addition to a selection of letters and a signed photograph by Amelia Earhart (highlights of the sale), the house also offers a pair of flight goggles used during her 1932 transatlantic solo flight. ◆ April 15 at 2: Photographs from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including works by Julia Cameron and Paul Grotz (a portrait of Walker Evans, from 1929). (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA

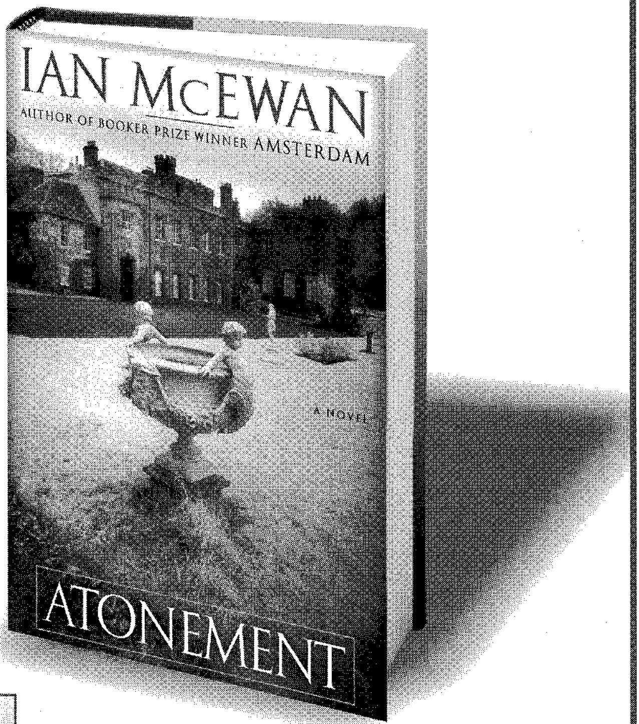
"Rigoletto," with Ruth Ann Swenson, Irina Mishura, Frank Lopardo, Carlo Guelfi (in the title role), and Sergei Koptchak; Marco Guidarini conducts. (April 10 at 8.) ◆ The Met début of Juan Diego Flórez, in the season première of **"Il Barbiere di Siviglia,"** in January, had the audience on its feet: not, perhaps, since the days of Luigi Alva—like Flórez, a native of Peru—has there been a bel-canto tenor with such an effortless coloratura style and such a natural sense of drama. The return of the production has another draw, Vesselina Kasarova, the vibrant Bulgarian mezzo-soprano whose own début at the house has been long awaited. Also with Simon Keenlyside, Paul Plishka, and John Relyea; Yves Abel. (April 11 and April 15 at 8.) ◆ Teresa Stratas's legendary appearances in the title role of **"Lulu"** had a deranged and sexually explosive edge, but Christine Schäfer's interpretation—she's a cool, evasive man-killer with a sheen of childlike innocence—may be even closer to the model of Louise Brooks, the iconic Lulu of the film "Pandora's Box." The excellent David Kuebler and James Courtney—also returning from last spring's performances—are her hapless, father-and-son suitors; James Levine. (April 12 and April 16 at 8.) ◆ It's not until the devastating final act of Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's **"Sly"** that Plácido Domingo's patronage of this 1927 tragedy (spun off from the introduction to "The Taming of the Shrew") becomes understandable; until then the score is like a Lloyd Webber musical, with one good tune bobbing up in the stream. The staging, by his wife, Marta, is campy and conventional, but the ever-youthful Domingo, in the title role, has strong support from the other two leads, Maria Guleghina and Juan Pons; Marco Armiliato. (April 13 at 1:30.) ◆ **"Falstaff,"** a restaging of Franco Zeffirelli's 1964 production, with Juan Pons (in the title role), Marina Mescheriakova, Lyubov Petrova, Wendy White, Susanne Mentzer, Gwyn Hughes Jones, and Dwayne Croft; Levine. (April 13 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

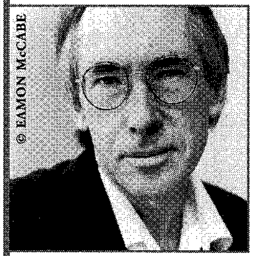
NEW YORK CITY OPERA

Handel's **"Agrippina,"** with Brenda Harris (in the title role), Kimberly Barber, Nancy Allen Lundy, David Walker, Ryland Angel, and Gregory Reinhart; the conductor is Jane Glover. (April 11 at 7:30 and April 13 at 1:30.) ◆ **"Carmen,"** with Kirstin Chávez, Monique McDonald, Yevgeny Shapovalov, and Michael Chioldi; George Manahan. (April 12 at 8.) ◆ **"Tosca,"** with Anna Shafajinskaia, Gerard Powers, and Jeffrey Kneebone; Steven Mosteller. (April 13 at 8.) ◆ **"Don Giovanni,"** with Virginia Grasso, Sally Wolf, Anna Christy, Brian Davis (in the title role), David Adams, Michael Wanko, and Marcus DeLoach; Manahan. (April 14 at 1:30.) ◆ John Philip Sousa's stirring marches may have glorified America's first years of imperial power, but in his 1913 operetta, **"The Glass Blowers"**—set in a glass factory, just before the Spanish-American War—he had the gumption to satirize the excesses of jingoism and the stock market (against the background of a romantic comedy). Sousa was no Jo-

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

Ian McEwan's
"Powerful and Exquisite"*
Novel of Betrayal and Forgiveness





"No one now writing fiction in the English language surpasses Ian McEwan."
—JONATHAN YARDLEY, *The Washington Post Book World*

"A tour de force...McEwan's most deeply felt novel yet." —MICHIKO KAKUTANI, *The New York Times*

"A beautiful and majestic fictional panorama." —JOHN UPDIKE, *The New Yorker*

"A work of vaulting ambition which just also happens to be a page-turner."
—DAPHNE MERKIN, *Los Angeles Times*

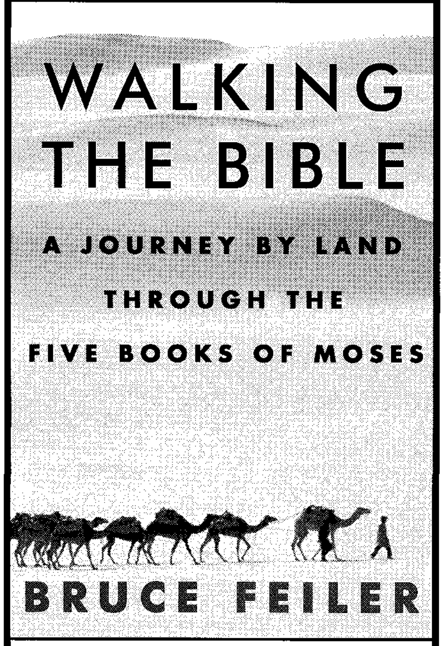
SHORTLISTED FOR THE BOOKER PRIZE

A BOOK SENSE 76 PICK™

NAN A. TALESE
DOUBLEDAY

Available wherever books are sold • www.nanatalese.com
A Featured Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club *Kirkus Reviews*

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER!



WALKING THE BIBLE

A JOURNEY BY LAND THROUGH THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES

BRUCE FEILER

“Smart and savvy, insightful and illuminating.”
—Los Angeles Times

“Thoughtful, informed, and perceptive... ground[s] the Bible in real soil and in real history.”
—New York Times

“An instant classic.... A pure joy to read.”
—Washington Post Book World

ALSO AVAILABLE HarperAudio

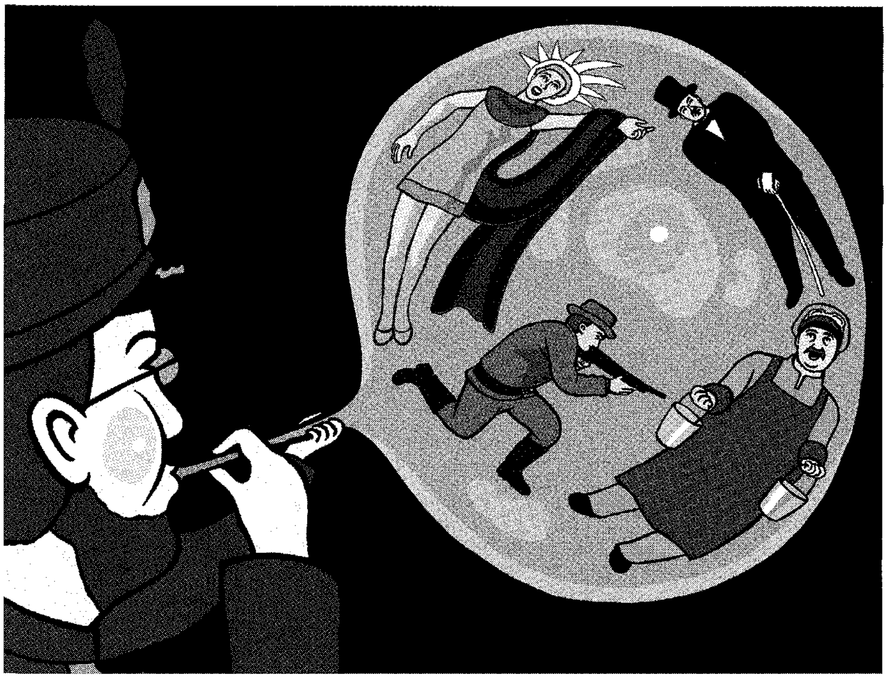
www.brucefeiler.com

Perennial
An Imprint of HarperCollins*Publishers*

NOW IN PAPERBACK

hann Strauss, but the music is pleasantly diverting, and the production is gorgeously silly. With Anna Christy, Jennifer Dudley, Jeffrey Lentz, and Richard Whitehouse; Jonathan Sheffer. (April 16 at 7:30.) (New York State Theatre. 307-4100.)

THE MONTEVERDI CYCLE
The Brooklyn Academy of Music continues its April festival of all three of Monteverdi's surviving operas—the foundation stones of the operatic repertory. William Christie and his exquisite charges, Les Arts Florissants, tackle the first (and least appreciated) of them, **"Il Ritorno D'Ulisse in Patria,"** an intimate epic of Ulysses's return to Ithaca and his wife, Penelope; the director is the Royal Shakespeare Company's Adrian Noble. (BAM Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. April 10 at 8 and April 11 and April 13-14 at 7:30.) ♦ If "Ulisse" celebrates all that is noble in the human character, **"The Coronation of Poppea"** takes a darker view: set in ancient Rome, it relates the story of Nero and his mistress, Poppea, whose nefarious political and sexual machinations bring all of their wishes to fruition. (No wonder it's more popular.) The harpsichordist Christophe Rousset brings his ensemble Les Talens Lyriques to Brooklyn for its U.S. début, in a production by Pierre Audi; the singers include Cynthia Haymon, Anne Brigette Balleys, and Michael Chance. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. April 16 at 7; through April 21.)



John Philip Sousa's "The Glass Blowers" premières at City Opera on April 16.

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
Some conductors bring extra drama to musical works, but Riccardo Muti's gift has always been to give an elegant shape to music that is already dramatic in itself. He has long been an advocate of the orchestral works of Scriabin, most of which (aside from the "Poem of Ecstasy") are routinely ignored; the First Symphony, an ardently Romantic piece that ends with a chorus in praise of art, has not been performed by the Philharmonic since 1907. Muti revives it with the assistance of the singers Larissa Diadkova and Sergej Larin and the New York Choral Artists; the program begins with Schubert's Symphony No. 6 (the "Little C Major"). (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. April 11, April 13, and April 15 at 8 and April 12 at 2.)

ORCHESTRAS AT CARNEGIE HALL
Two farewells. April 11 at 8: Seiji Ozawa—after one of the longest and most controversial careers in American orchestral history—makes his final Carnegie Hall appearance as director of the Boston Symphony. The program draws from two of his strengths: French music (the "Symphonie Fantastique") and modern repertory (Bartók's Concerto for Two Pianos and Percussion, with the pianists Randall Hodgkinson and Benjamin Pasternack). ♦ April 14 at 3: Dennis Russell Davies leaves the directorship of the American Composers Orchestra in high style, conducting not only two premières (Francis Thorne's Concerto for Orchestra and "Falling Dream," by the young composer Kevin Puts) but music by John Cage (the Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra, with Margaret Leng Tan) and Elliott Carter. (247-7800.)

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHORUS OF NEW YORK
This teen-age chorus's latest program is so sophisticated it could put many adult choirs to shame; it includes music by Martinů, Steven Mackey ("The Attic Which Is Desire," a première), and Debussy (the lustrous cantata "La Damoiselle Élue," with the soprano Camellia Johnson and the Perspectives Ensemble). Francisco J. Núñez conducts. (92nd St. Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5500. April 14 at 3.)

RECITALS

BARGEMUSIC
Two programs coördinated by the violinist Carmit Zori. April 11 and April 13 at 7:30: The pianist Phillip Bush, the cellist Peter Wiley, and others play music by Mozart, Schumann, and Fauré (the Piano Quartet in G Minor, Op. 45). ♦ April 12 at 7:30 and April 14 at 4: A program of Brahms (including the Piano Quartet in C Minor and some songs), with the pianist Gil Kalish and the baritone William Sharp. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

"NEW SOUNDS LIVE": BANG ON A CAN ALL STARS AND THE NORA YORK ENSEMBLE
The virtuoso All Stars, downtown's reigning new-music group, have always tried to emulate the slashing energy of rock; this program is an homage to some of their idols, including arrangements of music by Steppenwolf, Nirvana ("Lithium"), and Brian Eno. Joining them are the avant-garde diva Nora York and her ensemble, who perform music by Jimi Hendrix and—go figure—Stephen Foster. WNYC's John Schafer hosts. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. April 11 at 8.)

MUSIC AT THE ANTHOLOGY
The annual downtown music festival, executive-produced by Philip Glass, offers a chance to sample works by some of the best young composers around, including two commissions. April 10 at 8: Theo Bleckmann, the radical cabaret vocalist, performs a new piece written for him by Moritz Eggert and the cartoon essayist Ben Katchor. Also included are works by Christopher Adler, Erin Gee, and James Matheson; the program is topped off with a work by America's veteran master of spatial music, Henry Brant. ♦ April 12 at 8: Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, a hot young chamber orchestra out of Montreal, performs music by such composers as Lisa Bielawa, Eleanor Sandresky, and Oliver Schneller (a commission). Music by Messiaen, modernism's benign visionary, ends the festival. (Angel Orensanz Foundation, 172 Norfolk St., at Houston St. 646-792-2409.)

EMMANUEL PAHUD AND CHRISTOPH POPPEN
The flutist (known for the consummate elegance of his style) and the violinist (the star of the hit Bach album "Morimur") get together with friends for an evening of chamber music by Webern (the String Trio) and Fuminori Tanada (a New York première), as well as four works by Mozart. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 12 at 8.)

NEW YORK COLLEGIUM
Monica Huggett, for decades one of Europe's leading Baroque violinists, begins her tenure as concertmaster of the group, the most exciting early-music ensemble New York has seen in some time. The program includes music by Locke, Lully, Stradella, and others. (Ethical Culture Society Concert Hall, 2 W. 64th St. 717-9246. April 12 at 8.)

"WHEN MORTY MET JOHN . . ."
John Cage and Morton Feldman may have been temperamental opposites (one a brash New Yorker, the other a study in West Coast cool), but their friendship put them at the center of a circle of like-minded musicians, painters, and choreographers whose creative unity has been unmatched since. In the second year of a three-year concert series, Carnegie Hall celebrates their music. April 13 at 3: The pianist Margaret Leng Tan, the vocalist Joan La Barbara, the Flux Quartet, and others present such works as Cage's "One" and "Music for Nine" and Feldman's "For Franz Kline" and "The Viola in My Life." (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall.) ♦ April 13 at 7: Columbia University's St. Paul's Chapel provides an ideal setting for Feldman's meditative classic "Rothko Chapel," along with several pieces by Cage (including "Litany for the Whale"). The performers include the percussionist Steve Schick and the Vox Vocal Ensemble (directed by George Steel). (Broadway at 116th St.) ♦ April 14 at 7:30: The series closes with La Barbara's performance of Feldman's "Three Voices," for soprano and tape. (Weill Recital Hall. For information about tickets, call 247-7800.)

RICHARD GOODE
Chances to hear this sensitive American pianist don't come around very often nowadays; in his only New York recital of the season, he performs music by Debussy, Beethoven, and Schubert (the Sonata in A Major, D. 959), at the Metropolitan Museum. (Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 13 at 8.)

CHICAGO STRING QUARTET
From the heartland comes one of the most forceful and intelligent of American quartets, presenting a program of Beethoven (the "Harp"), Dvořák (the "American"), and Richard Wilson, at Merkin Concert Hall. (129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. April 13 at 8:30.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"MR. SINUS THEATER"
The movie "Xanadu," starring Olivia Newton-John as a real-life muse and Gene Kelly as a roller-disco entrepreneur and featuring music by the Electric Light Orchestra, is every bit as preposterous as this brief summary suggests. Since its 1980 release, though, it has acquired a cult following, emerging as the guiltiest of guilty pleasures. Using the talk-back-to-the-screen formula perfected by the cable-TV show "Mystery Science Theater 3000," this Austin, Texas-based comedy troupe sends up, and secures, "Xanadu" 's unlikely status. (Chicago City Limits, 1105 First Ave., at 61st St. 888-5233. April 11-12 at 10:30 and April 13 at midnight.)

READINGS
April 10 at 6:30: The poets Robert Creeley, Rita Dove, and Sonia Sanchez read from their work, as Poetry in Motion, the program that brings verse to those stuck on subways and buses, celebrates its tenth anniversary. (Vanderbilt Hall, Grand Central Terminal. For more information, call 254-9628.) ♦ April 10 at 8: The actors Paul Hecht and Leonard Nimoy offer stories by Conrad Aiken and Fitz-James O'Brien. The writer Michael Chabon is the host. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) ♦ April 15 at 8: Kathryn Walker, Zoe Caldwell, David Strathairn, Kate Burton, and other actors perform Anne Carson's translation of Sophocles' "Electra." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5500.)

TALKS
April 10 at 6:30: The art critics Lance Esplund and Jed Perl join the painter William Bailey and the curator Sabine Rewald for a consideration of Balthus's later works. (New York Studio School, 8 W. 8th St. 673-6466.) ♦ April 10 at 7:30: The journalist and historian Tariq Ali discusses his latest book, "The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity." (Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture, 53 Prospect Park W., near 1st St., Park Slope. For more information, call 718-783-3075.) ♦ April 11 at 7: The musician and writer Vivien Goldman points out the worldwide influences of Jamaican music, with the help of the d.j. Ras Kush and the photographer David Corio. (Sulzberger Parlor, Barnard Hall, Barnard College, Broadway at 117th St. For more information, call 854-2037.)

You write a 2,000 word essay.
We write a $20,000 cheque.

'How much freedom should we trade for our security?'

That's the topic for this year's writing competition organized by Shell and The Economist. Entries should be no more than 2,000 words. 1st prize $20,000. Two 2nd prizes of $10,000 each. Five 3rd prizes of $5,000 each. The winning essay will be published in The Economist publication *The World in 2003*.

Visit www.shelleconomistprize.com for details and conditions.

The Economist

MOVIES OPENING

THE CAT'S MEOW

Peter Bogdanovich directed this drama about the unexplained death, in 1924, of the film producer Thomas Ince (Cary Elwes) aboard the yacht of William Randolph Hearst. With Kirsten Dunst as Marion Davies and Eddie Izzard as Charlie Chaplin. Opening April 12.

CHANGING LANES

A fender bender on the F.D.R. Drive between a lawyer (Ben Affleck) and a divorced father (Samuel L. Jackson) escalates into an all-out feud. Roger Michell directed. Opening April 12.

FRAILTY

In a thriller he also directed, Bill Paxton plays a father living in rural Texas who enlists his sons in a murderous effort to rid the world of demons. With Matthew McConaughey, who narrates the story in a series of flashbacks. Opening April 12.

HUMAN NATURE

A comedy about a writer with a genetic defect (Patricia Arquette), a repressed scientist (Tim Robbins), and a feral young man (Rhys Ifans). Directed by Michel Gondry and written by Charlie Kaufman ("Being John Malkovich"). Opening April 12.

KARMEN GEI

The Senegalese filmmaker Joseph Gai Ramaka sets "Carmen" in modern-day Dakar. In French and Wolof. Opening April 10. (Film Forum.)

MULE SKINNER BLUES

A documentary about the ornery denizens of a trailer park located near Jacksonville, Florida. Opening April 12. (Cinema Village.)

THE SWEETEST THING

Roger Kumble ("Cruel Intentions") directed this comedy in which a club-hopping party girl (Cameron Diaz) chases after Mr. Right. The cast includes Selma Blair, Parker Posey, Christina Applegate, and Jason Bateman. Opening April 12.

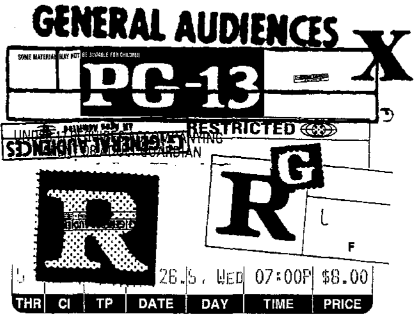
FILM NOTES

AMADEUS

The lofty playwright Peter Shaffer has the minor composer Salieri (F. Murray Abraham) declaring war on Heaven for cheating him, and determined to ruin the incomparable Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Tom Hulce) because God's voice is speaking through him. The story is told to a priest (and to us) many years later, by the mad, suicidal old Salieri, and there is the suggestion that what we're seeing is his delusion, but the weight of this 1984 production, which is reminiscent of big biographical movies such as "The Life of Emile Zola" and "A Song to Remember," asserts its own kind of authority. The director, Milos Forman, trudges through the movie as if every step were a major contribution to art, and he keeps the audience hooked. Some redeeming qualities: Mozart's music; Twyla Tharp's staging of the dances and opera excerpts; Abraham's eager, slimy Salieri; Jeffrey Jones's amusingly vapid Emperor Joseph II; and downtown Prague as eighteenth-century Vienna.—*Pauline Kael* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

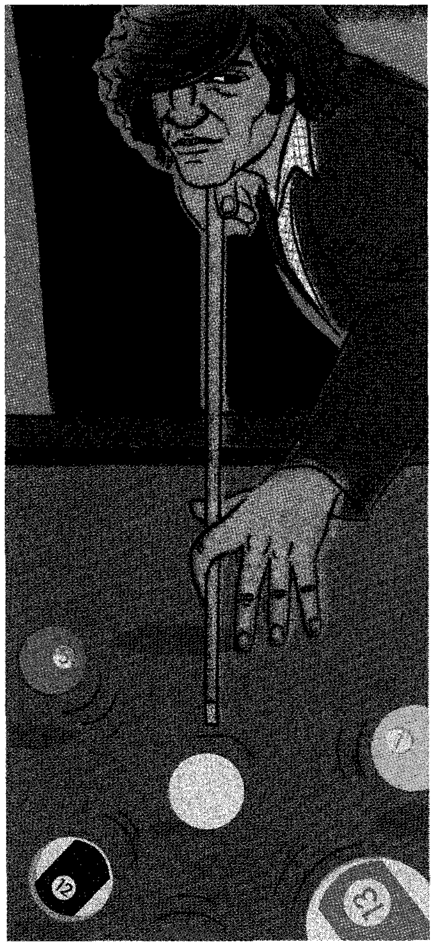
A BEAUTIFUL MIND

If you think the title stinks, try the movie. On March 24, it received Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Adapted Screenplay, thus proving that although the Academy may shy away from honoring comedies, some of its own decisions can still be guaranteed to give us all a good laugh. Russell Crowe plays John Nash, a real-life mathematician whose most radical work was produced in his early twenties and who shared the 1994 Nobel Prize for Economics at the age of sixty-six. In between lay years of darkness, during which Nash was assailed by paranoid schizophrenia. When it comes to the delicate matter of his delusions, this earnest movie, written by Akiva Goldsman and directed by Ron Howard, pulls a flagrant scam: whole characters and episodes are presented as urgently authentic, only to be revealed as figments of a cracked imagination. Crowe pulls out the stops, but he looks too bullish and controlled for such a pitiable victim. The movie grinds on forever until it bumps into redemption; the best reason to stay with it is Jennifer Connelly, who smolders and suffers to perfection as Nash's weary wife. Math skills not required.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 1/7/02.) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)



BLADE II

Guillermo del Toro, whose last project was the near-perfect ghost story "The Devil's Backbone," returns with this giddily absurd comic-book extravaganza, which is darker and displays more devilish wit than the original. The action scenes brim with bravura camera movements that seem influenced by the great Japanese *anime* directors. Wesley Snipes, as Blade, shows up for some acrobatic swordplay and throws his spectacular body around like a pumped-on-steroids Baryshnikov. The story is pulpy nonsense about vampires fighting super-vampires, but the film's anything-goes pop carnage is a horror fan's delight.—*Bruce Diones* (Astor Plaza, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)



Rick Danko shooting pool in "The Last Waltz," returning to theatres April 12.

THE CLOCK

A sweetly charming, if maybe too irresistible, Second World War romance. It has a wet script, but the director Vincente Minnelli (this was his first job of nonmusical direction) gave this 1945 picture a very distinctive innocent quality, so that it doesn't seem intolerably calculated. Robert Walker plays a gentle country boy, a corporal with two days of leave in New York before he goes overseas. He meets Judy Garland, a New York office worker, and they go sightseeing together. The movie has a love-hate relationship with New York City: it makes each of the young lovers feel alone and frightened, yet together they can enjoy it. Amazingly, it was all shot in the studio, using street sets and back projection—even the old Penn Station, where so much of the action takes place, is a set.—*P.K.* (Symphony Space; April 14.)

DEATH TO SMOOCHY

Not really a movie. More of a fifty-car highway pileup disguised as a movie. Robin Williams plays the host of a children's TV show—smiling onstage, all snarls elsewhere. He is fired for taking bribes, and, under the eye of a steely producer (Catherine Keener), his place is taken by a sweet, health-conscious fool (Ed Norton) in a rhino suit. Danny DeVito appears as a bouncy slimeball; he also directed the movie, which—and this is both a wild guess and a recommendation—may not appear on the stars' résumés in future years. It really is one to expunge: semi-plotted, silly yet funless, with overstuffed performances and a strange visual coating that manages to be at once plastic and sweaty. A shame, because there is a great comedy to be made about children's television and the empurpling stranglehold of Barney and his ilk. With Harvey Fierstein as a mobster; yes, it's that convincing.—*A.L.* (Chelsea West, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

LES DESTINÉES

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

ICE AGE

A genial, computer-animated fable about a woolly mammoth, a sabre-toothed tiger, and a motor-mouthed sloth (voiced by John Leguizamo) who battle prehistoric blizzards and earthquakes to return a baby safely to her tribe. The film is stylishly designed by the director Chris Wedge, and the animators don't try to outdo the dazzling visual sophistication of "Shrek" or "A Bug's Life." It's exactly this low-key attention to entertaining storytelling—minus the kid-friendly tunes—that makes the movie a worthwhile change of pace.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia I and II, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.)

IRIS

Richard Eyre imparts an affectionate and reverential gloss to the mental decline of the writer Iris Murdoch. He tells the story in a series of linked vignettes, with scenes from the life of the young Iris juxtaposed with those from the old. It's a particular trick of film, to fuse together the ages of life this way—a technique with an edge of cruelty that also gives it sting. Judi Dench plays the elderly Iris, and her portrayal of Murdoch's sickness is physically precise, a careful study of carriage and expression. Jim Broadbent, as the old John Bayley, is initially all donnish bemusement, but his performance deepens as he becomes a caregiver overtaken by chagrin and grief. Kate Winslet and Hugh Bonneville play the couple in their youth, and in their too brief scenes they charmingly convey a love in the offing, a bumbler chasing a sprite.—*Michael Agger* (Cinema 2, Empire 25, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE LAST WALTZ

Arguably, the best of all rock-concert documentaries. Martin Scorsese's film of the Band's Thanks-

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

giving, 1976, performance in San Francisco is even-tempered and intensely satisfying. Visually, it's dark-toned and rich and classically simple. It's a relief to see a concert film without whizzing-around, catch-as-catch-can cinematography; Scorsese planned the camera cues like a general deploying his troops, and Michael Chapman, Vilmos Zsigmond, Laszlo Kovacs, and David Myers are a few of those responsible for the serene imagery and its inner excitement. With Band members—Robbie Robertson, Levon Helm, Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel, and Rick Danko. Also with performers who represent the different styles of rock and the traditions that have fuelled it—Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Van Morrison, Eric Clapton, Muddy Waters, Neil Young, Ronnie Hawkins, Dr. John, the Staples, Ringo Starr, Paul Butterfield, Emmylou Harris, Neil Diamond, and others.—*P.K.* (Union Square.)

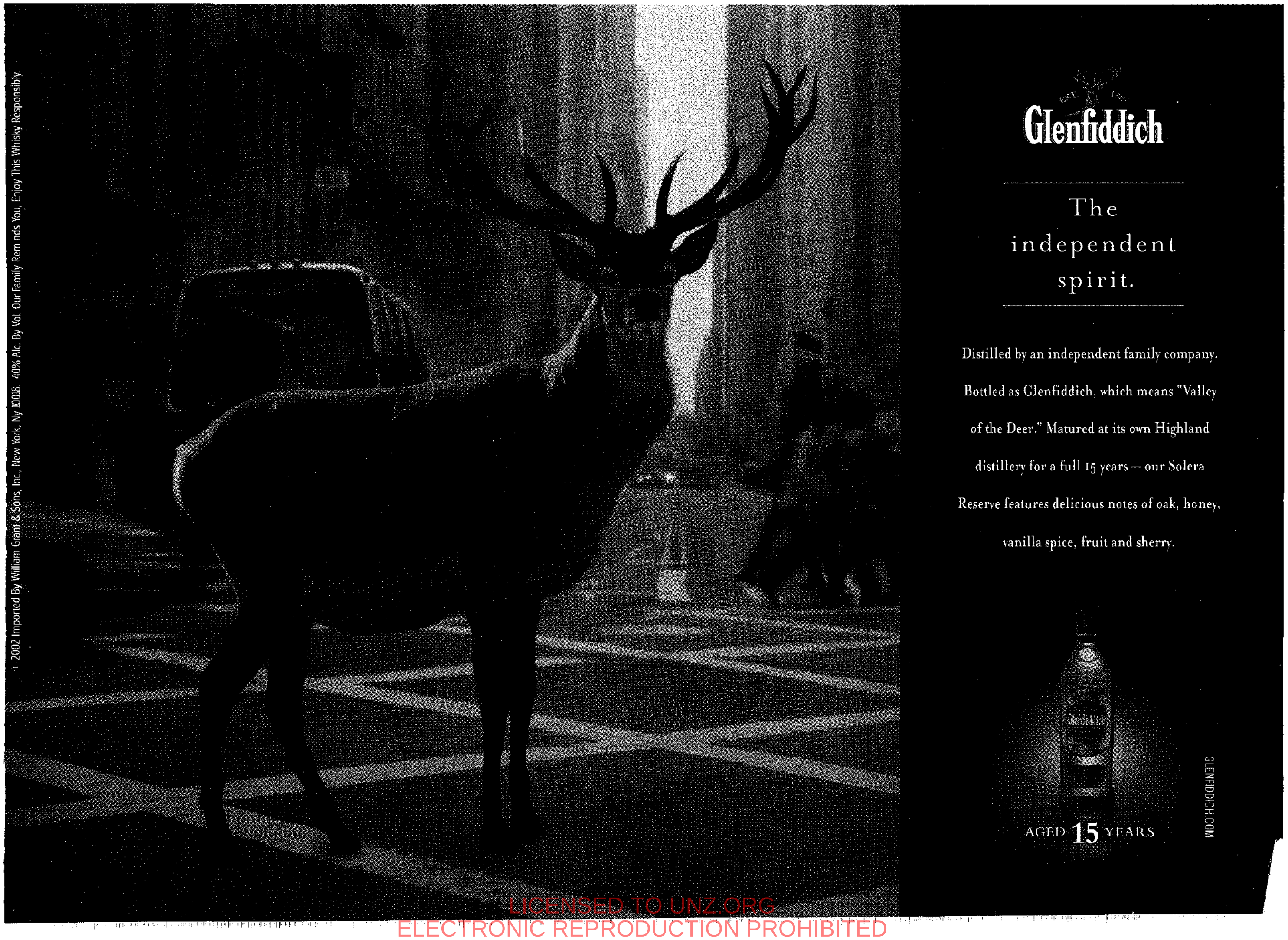
MONSOON WEDDING
Mira Nair's new picture has been hailed as a feel-good spree, but it's better than that—a barely stable compound of the wounding, the confusing, and the appealing. The action takes place in Delhi, where a pair of middle-class parents (Lillete Dubey and Naseeruddin Shah) work themselves into a froth over the nuptials of their daughter (Vasundhara Das). Her marriage is, of course, arranged; for all the racket and buzz of the film's modernity, it finds time to make the suggestion—bewildering, perhaps, to audiences here—that from this archaic arrangement can spring an enduring love. The groom is flying in from Houston, Texas; another relative travels from Australia, and you brace yourself for the cultural collisions. The result is a comedy, but only just. India's stressful poise between orthodoxy and innovation (listen for the clash of peacock and cell phone) leads to a devastating family fracture that is only half-healed by the celebrations at the end. In English and Hindi.—*A.L.* (2/18 & 25/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Paris, Sunshine Cinema, and 34th Street Theatre.)

MONSTER'S BALL
Marc Forster's movie delivers an unworkable paradox: the characters are inarticulate, damaged people who have led heedless and tragic lives—portrayed with bitter realism—and yet the plotting is sheer Hollywood in its schemes and coincidences. Billy Bob Thornton is the Georgia corrections officer who conducts the execution of the husband (Sean "P. Diddy" Combs) of a local waitress (Halle Berry) and then falls in love with the widow. The slow, reticent dramaturgy has its moments of authenticity, especially in the balanced interracial romance: Thornton is quiet and affecting and Berry acts up a storm.—*David Denby* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.)

MY MAN GODFREY
In this entertaining and hugely successful 1936 screwball comedy about the Depression, Carole Lombard is a rich, gorgeous nit who goes to the city dump to find a "forgotten man." The man she finds—a suave, bitter victim of the economic collapse—is played by William Powell. When she tells him she needs to take him back to a party in order to win a scavenger hunt, he asks what that is, and, sighing, she says, "A scavenger hunt is just like a treasure hunt, except in a treasure hunt you find something you want and in a scavenger hunt you find things you don't want and the one who wins gets a prize, only there really isn't any prize, it's just the honor of winning, because all the money goes to charity if there's any money left over, but then there never is." Lombard has a delirious, breathless plaintiveness at a moment like this—recognition dawning in her. The movie starts out with a promising satiric idea and winds up in box-office romance, but it's likable and well-paced even at its silliest.—*P.K.* (Film Forum; April 14-15.)

PANIC ROOM
The title of the new David Fincher film refers to a secure stronghold that is built into the walls of a New York house. Think of it as a safe, in which you lock your loved ones as well as your money. It is in one such room that a divorced mother (Jodie Foster) and her daughter (Kristen Stewart) take refuge when three burglars (Forest Whitaker, Dwight Yoakam, and Jared Leto) break in at night. From here on it's a game of cat and mouse, with the cat swinging a sledgehammer and the mice trying to reach their cell phone. The result is not so much scary as endlessly worrying; the movie was designed, propitiously, to suck in all the insecurities that you can imagine, and a few that you can't. What lends the ordeal its bite is the playoff between Whitaker, with his sluggish menace, and the tight-lipped, fretting Foster. Are you sure you locked up before going out to the theatre?—*A.L.* (4/8/02) (Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE PIANO TEACHER
Michael Haneke's calmly lucid masterpiece is about a seemingly unmanageable subject: a sadomasochistic piano teacher, Professor Erika Kohut (Isabelle Huppert), who maintains a sternly proper façade at the Vienna Conservatory while tormenting and playing dirty tricks on her talented students. Erika lives in an apartment with her hysterically possessive mother (Annie Girardot)—the two take turns slapping each other—and she tries to control the insolently charming and handsome young piano student (Benoît Magimel) who wants to be her lover. She may be a certifiable nut straight out of clinical literature, but she's also a remarkable dramatic creation—an appalling but plausible human being brought to life by one of the world's bravest actresses. Huppert, whose masklike face seethes with rage, gives a classic account of repression and sexual hypocrisy. This is a genuinely shocking movie (one scene of self-mutilation is hard to take), but it's supremely intelligent, too, and there isn't a trace of sensationalism. Music by



Glenfiddich

The
independent
spirit.

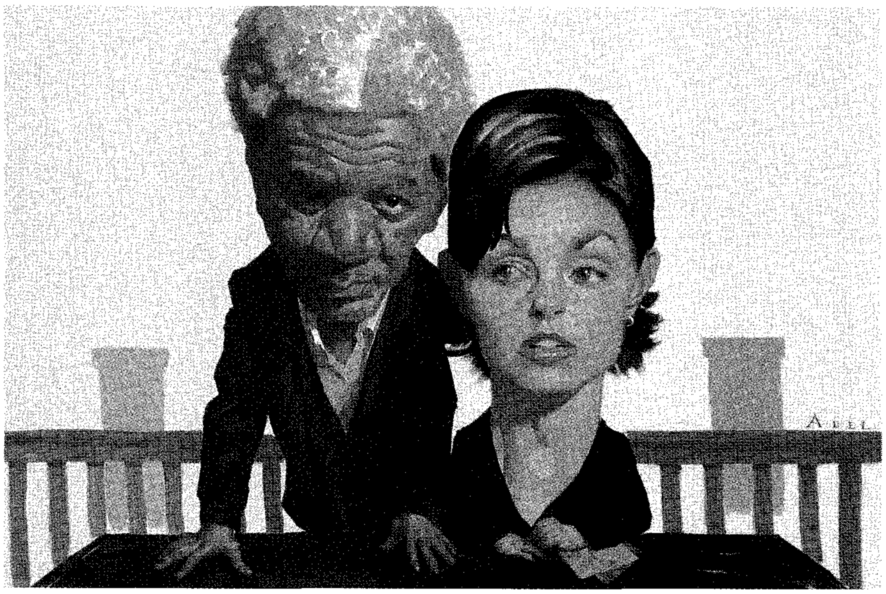
Distilled by an independent family company. Bottled as Glenfiddich, which means "Valley of the Deer." Matured at its own Highland distillery for a full 15 years — our Solera Reserve features delicious notes of oak, honey, vanilla spice, fruit and sherry.

AGED 15 YEARS

GLENFIDDICH.COM

© 2002 Imported By William Grant & Sons, Inc., New York, Ny 10018. 40% Alc. By Vol. Our Family Reminds You, Enjoy This Whisky Responsibly.

Bach, Schubert, and Brahms is central to the narrative. In French.—*D.D.* (4/1/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas and Cinema Village.)


Morgan Freeman and Ashley Judd in "High Crimes."

DANIEL ADEL

SANJURO
Akira Kurosawa's 1962 samurai adventure is the sassy kid brother to "Yojimbo"—and like many lighthearted younger siblings, it's underappreciated. Kurosawa took a story he'd already developed about a semi-strong but very wily swordsman and turned it into another vehicle for Toshiro Mifune's funky warrior. This one kicks into gear when Sanjuro eavesdrops on several youthful samurai discussing a corrupt clan chamberlain and a sympathetic superintendent. He can tell that the young blades are well-meaning fools—the superintendent is evil, the chamberlain righteous—but he aligns himself with them and saves their lives. Mifune is magnificent—earthy and funny—not far removed from John Belushi's parody of him on "Saturday Night Live." In Japanese.—*Michael Sragow* (BAM Rose Cinemas; April 15-16.)

SECONDS
John Frankenheimer's macabre 1966 sci-fi thriller about a diabolical conspiratorial organization that arranges for people to be "reborn" via plastic surgery. There are some good ideas tucked away inside the scrambled unpleasantness; the best of them concerns a banker (John Randolph) who is vaguely dissatisfied with his life and arranges a Faustian bargain for a second chance (he comes back as Rock Hudson) but doesn't have any conception of a new life. Frankenheimer shows off (he even stages a bacchanal), and James Wong Howe displays his camera pyrotechnics as if they were going on sale in the nation's supermarkets.—*P.K.* (Anthology Film Archives; April 12-13.)

STOLEN SUMMER
A train wreck of a movie that's of interest only as a curiosity piece for fans of "Project Greenlight," the reality television series that captured the wobbly directorial début of Pete Jones, a Chicago insurance salesman and aspiring screenwriter. The minor-league backstabbing of the production team was captured on camera, but more revealing were the forthright discussions about plot, motivation, and scene. We all know smart people make bad movies, but now we know how: by consensus, on speakerphone, in meetings with plenty of bottled water. Jones's original script presumably had spark, but the version that made it to the screen reads as if it were cribbed from the Boy Scout handbook. Matters aren't helped by the two child actors who anchor the film and speak their lines as if speaking were something new to them. With Aidan Quinn, Kevin Pollak, and Bonnie Hunt earning some combat pay.—*M.A.* (Cinema 3, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.)

THE TIME MACHINE
The dyspeptic novel by H. G. Wells about a Victorian inventor who dabbles in time travel gets a New Age makeover courtesy of his great-grandson, the director Simon Wells. As Alexander Hartdegen, Guy Pearce does an admirable job of keeping a straight face, and his rides in the time machine are astonishing special-effects displays. One set piece—a triple-time morphing of nineteenth-century Manhattan into our skyscraper era—could be shown at the Hayden Planetarium. Even the improbable leaps of logic and the bland, international English dialogue don't really dampen the fun. It's when Pearce arrives in the future and discovers the Eloi (sort of like the Anasazi, except they're really into bamboo) that the race and class issues get an awkward, cringe-inducing treatment.—*M.A.* (Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas.)

TIME OUT
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN
A new movie from the Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón, who came to Hollywood to make "A Little Princess" and "Great Expectations" and who has now returned in triumph to his homeland. The story is a stripped-down road movie: two teen-age friends, one rich (Diego Luna) and one poor (Gael García Bernal), borrow a car and set off to find the perfect beach, in the company of a Spanish woman (Maribel Verdú) who is not merely older, but married. Plus, she seems inexplicably happy to take either, or both, of them to bed. All the boys' dreams, in other words, have come true, and they can hardly handle it. What ensues is a sad and sexy picaresque, as everyone's illusions are peeled off along with their clothes. Cuarón's style is so open and relaxed, and his actors are so attuned to one another, that not until the final scene, with its litany of revelations, do we see that what felt life-affirming has also been a meditation on the slide of time, and on the offstage presence of death. Unrated, and therefore full of proper sex, with all the improprieties intact. In Spanish.—*A.L.* (3/18/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas. Lincoln Plaza, 19th Street East 6, and Sunshine Cinema.)

ALSO PLAYING

AMÉLIE (11/5/01)
Angelika Film Center, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, 59th Street East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Murray Hill Cinemas.

E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL (3/25/02)
Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Olympia I and II, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

GOSFORD PARK (1/14/02)
Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

HIGH CRIMES
Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, East 86th Street Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.

MARGARITA HAPPY HOUR
The Screening Room.

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER
Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

NO SUCH THING
Angelika Film Center.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through May 5: "Hardboiled Hollywood." April 13 at 2: "The Maltese Falcon" (1941, John Huston). ♦ April 13 at 4: "Hammett" (1982, Wim Wenders). ♦ April 14 at 2: "High Sierra" (1941, Raoul Walsh). ♦ April 14 at 4: "The Asphalt Jungle"

(1950, Huston). ♦ Repertory nights. April 13-14 at 6:30: "L'Argent" (1983, Robert Bresson; in French).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES

32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—April 11 at 7:30 and April 13 at 4: "Alfie" (1966, Lewis Gilbert). ♦ April 12 at 7, April 13 at 5 and 9:30, and April 14 at 6:30: "Late August, Early September" (1999, Olivier Assayas; in French). ♦ April 12 at 7:30 and April 14 at 2:45: "Lonely Are the Brave" (1962, David Miller). ♦ April 12 at 9:30, April 13 at 3 and 7:30, and April 14 at 4:30 and 9: "Irma Vep" (1997, Assayas; in French). ♦ April 12 at 9:45 and April 13 at 9:30: "Seconds" (†). ♦ April 13 at 6:30: "The Big Heat" (1953, Fritz Lang).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS

30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—April 12-14: "No Man's Land: The Splintering of Yugoslavia," a selection of films and videos about the recent wars in Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo. ♦ Repertory favorites. April 15-16 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Sanjuro" (†).

FILM FORUM

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through June 6: "The Great American Comedy." April 10 at 3, 6:15, and 9:30: "I'm No Angel" (1933, Wesley Ruggles). ♦ April 10 at 1:30, 4:45, and 8: "She Done Him Wrong" (1933, Lowell Sherman). ♦ April 11 at 1:30, 5:30, and 9:30: "It Happened One Night" (1934, Frank Capra). ♦ April 11 at 3:30 and 7:30: "Bringing Up Baby" (1938, Howard Hawks). ♦ April 12-13 at 1:05, 4:15, and 7:25: "A Night at the Opera" (1935, Sam Wood). ♦ April 12-13 at 2:50, 6, and 9:10: "Duck Soup" (1933, Leo McCarey). ♦ April 14 at 1: "Sally of the Sawdust" (1925, D. W. Griffith). ♦ April 14 at 3, 6:30, and 10 and April 15 at 1:20 and 4:50: "Easy Living" (1937, Mitchell Leisen). ♦ April 14 at 4:40 and 8:10 and April 15 at 3: "My Man Godfrey" (†). ♦ April 15 at 7 and 8:40: "Safety Last" (1923, Fred Newmeyer and Sam Taylor). ♦ April 16 at 1, 4, 7, and 10: "The General" (1926, Clyde Bruckman and Buster Keaton). ♦ April 16 at 2:30, 5:30, and 8:30: "Hands Up!" (1926, Clarence G. Badger).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Through April 15: Films by recipients of a Rockefeller Media Arts Fellowship. April 11 at 2:30: "Regret to Inform" (1998, Barbara Sonneborn). ♦ April 11 at 6: "Women, the Forgotten Face of War" (2002, Susan Muska and Gréta Olafsdóttir). ♦ April 12 at 1: "Smoke Signals" (1998, Chris Eyre). ♦ April 12 at 3: "King of the Jews" (2000, Jay Rosenblatt) and "Color Adjustment" (1991, Marlon Riggs). ♦ April 12 at 6: "Licensed to Kill" (1997, Arthur Dong). ♦ April 12 at 8: "Harvest 3000 Years" (1975, Haile Gerima; in Amharic). ♦ April 13 at 1: "Daughters of the Dust" (1991, Julie Dash). ♦ April 13 at 3:15: "Fathers: As Seen by Three Sons." ♦ April 13 at 5:45: "Relationships: Three Stories by Women." ♦ April 14 at 1: "Juan, I Forgot I Don't Remember" (1999, Juan Carlos Rulfo; in Spanish). ♦ April 14 at 3: "Chronicle of a Disappearance" (1996, Elia Suleiman). ♦ April 14 at 5: "Cities: As Seen by Two Artists." ♦ April 15 at 1: "Thirteen" (1997, David Williams). ♦ April 15 at 3: "To Sleep with Anger" (1990, Charles Burnett). ♦ April 15 at 6: "Bonanza" (2001, Ulises Rosell; in Spanish). ♦ Restored Italian classics. April 16 at 2:30: "I Vitelloni" (1953, Federico Fellini; in Italian). ♦ April 16 at 6: "Io, Io, Io . . . e gli Altri" (1966, Alessandro Blasetti; in Italian).

SYMPHONY SPACE

2537 Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—April 13-14: A marathon of New York City movies to celebrate the opening of the Leonard Nimoy Thalia. A free pair of tickets for any one film can be picked up at the box office. April 13 at noon: "West Side Story" (1961, Robert Wise). ♦ April 13 at 3: "Manhattan" (1979, Woody Allen). ♦ April 13 at 5: "On the Waterfront" (1954, Elia Kazan). ♦ April 13 at 7:15: "Annie Hall" (1977, Allen). ♦ April 13 at 9:15: "Mean Streets" (1973, Martin Scorsese). ♦ April 14 at noon: "New York, New York" (1977, Scorsese). ♦ April 14 at 3: "She's Gotta Have It" (1986, Spike Lee). ♦ April 14 at 4:45: "On the Town" (1949, Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly). ♦ April 14 at 6:45: "The Clock" (†). ♦ April 14 at 8:30: "Dog Day Afternoon" (1975, Sidney Lumet).

WALTER READE THEATRE

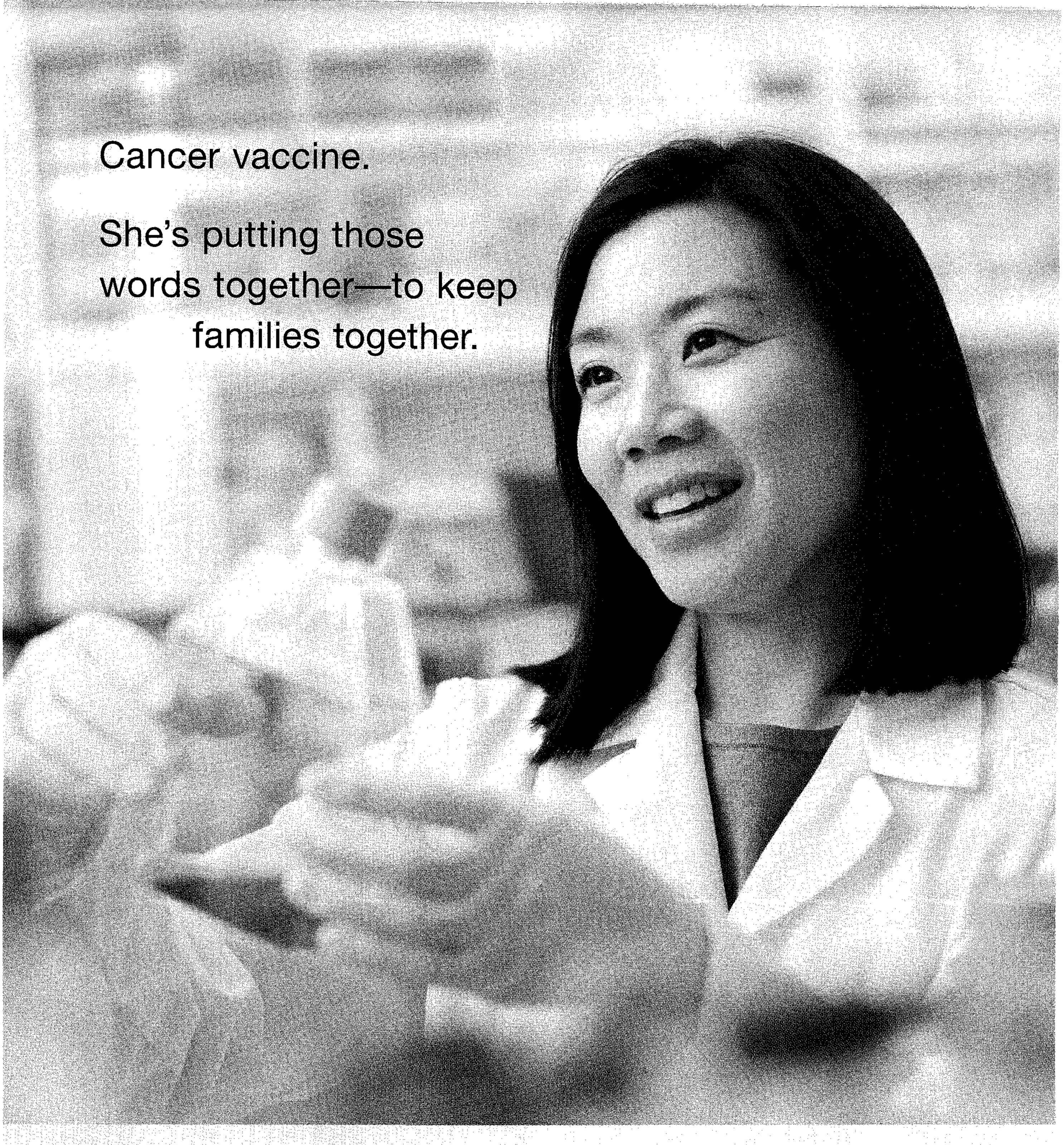
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through April 11: The New York African Film Festival. April 10 at 1: "Blue Sky" (2000, Patrick Meunier). ♦ April 10 at 2:45: "Daresalam" (2000, Issa Serge Coelo; in Chadian and French). ♦ April 10 at 4:50: "Dollar" (1999, Imunga Ivanga; in French). ♦ April 10 at 6:45: "Njangaan" (1974, Mahama Johnson Traoré; in Wolof and French). ♦ April 10 at 9 and April 11 at 1: "100 Days" (2000, Nick Hughes). ♦ April 11 at 3:15: "And So Angels Die" (2001, Moussa Sene Absa; in French and Wolof). ♦ April 11 at 6: "Shouting Silent" (2002, Renée E. Rosen and Xoliswa Sithole; in English and Zulu). ♦ April 11 at 8:30: "Hijack Stories" (2000, Oliver Schmitz). ♦ Starting April 12: "After the War, Before the Wall: German Cinema, 1945-60." All films are in German. April 12 at 1 and April 14 at 3 and 8:45: "The Murderers Are Among Us" (1946, Wolfgang Staudte). ♦ April 12 at 2:45 and April 16 at 3 and 7: "Black Forest Girl" (1950, Hans Deppe). ♦ April 12 at 4:45, April 14 at 6:45, and April 15 at 2:50: "The Sinner" (1950, Willi Forst). ♦ April 12 at 6:45: "I Often Think of Piroschka" (1955, Kurt Hoffmann). ♦ April 12 at 9: "Sky Without Stars" (1955, Helmut Käutner). ♦ April 13 at 2 and April 15 at 1 and 9:30: "Film Without a Title" (1947, Rudolf Jugert). ♦ April 13 at 3:50: "When Conny and Peter . . ." (1958, Fritz Umgelter). ♦ April 13 at 6: "The Devil Strikes at Night" (1957, Robert Siodmak). ♦ April 13 at 8:15: "The Bridge" (1959, Bernhard Wicki). ♦ April 14 at 1 and 4:45 and April 15 at 4:45: "In Those Days" (1947, Käutner). ♦ April 16 at 1, 5, and 9: "The Lost Man" (1951, Peter Lorre).

Don't bother calling.
JOAN'S TONGUE
We're sorry already.
COMEDY

SO GRAHAM NORTON
Dead Funny Comedy • Wed-Fri
Absolutely Fabulous Fri 9 pm/et
Coupling Fri 10:20 pm/et
So Graham Norton Fri 11 pm/et

BBC AMERICA

To receive BBC America, contact your local cable or satellite provider.


Cancer vaccine.
She's putting those words together—to keep families together.

Dr. Marian Nakada,
pharmaceutical company researcher

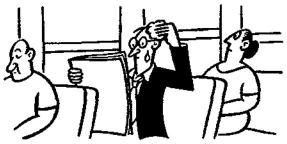
Marian Nakada is searching to find a cancer vaccine. She knows that developing such a vaccine would bring hope to millions of patients and their families. More than 50,000 researchers at America's pharmaceutical companies are dedicating their lives to making our lives better.

AMERICA'S PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES
NEW MEDICINES. NEW HOPE.
www.newmedicines.org

THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
ONE WAY OUT



On the less desperate days of the first Palestinian uprising, fifteen years ago, the rules of theatrical engagement were well understood. Foreign journalists would be notified of, say, an afternoon rock-throwing in Ramallah. The Palestinian stones, followed by the Israeli rubber bullets, would be loosed promptly upon the arrival of the press corps. Intifada I had its days of lethal violence, but, by today's standards, a Middle Eastern Marquis of Queensberry propriety obtained. The Palestinians hoped to broadcast the slingshot bravado of their young demonstrators; the Israelis, after their disastrous military campaign in Lebanon, in 1982, under Ariel Sharon, were at pains to show their (relative) restraint. Tragedy—or, at least, tragedy on the scale to which we have become accustomed—was usually avoided.

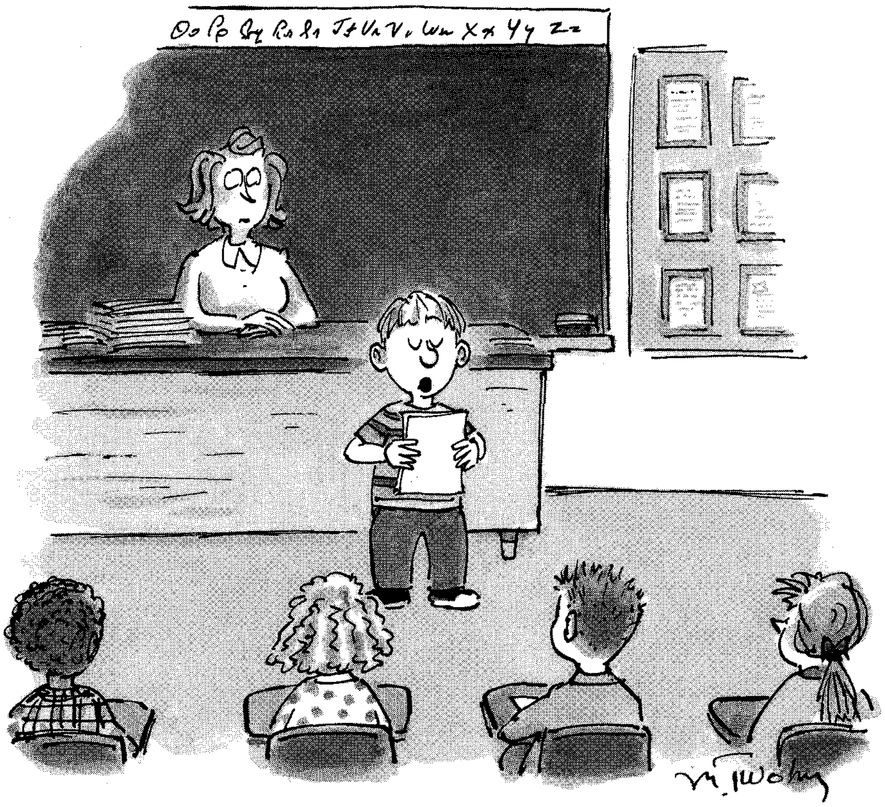
Now it is as if every violent reflex, every bitter impulse, had been unleashed, as if there were no limits. If diplomacy is, in part, the adoption of a decorous language to defuse historical resentments for political ends, then diplomacy was abandoned long ago. "We hate you," one of Yasir Arafat's senior aides, Ahmed Abdel Rahman, said last week, addressing the Israelis on the Al-Jazeera network. "The air hates you, the land hates you, the trees hate you—there is no purpose in your staying on this land." Sharon, now Israel's Prime Minister, has, at times, let on that he is sorry he did not kill Arafat when he had the chance in Lebanon. As a result, his handlers have advised him to speak only to interlocutors deemed reliable (Lally Weymouth, of *Newsweek;* William Safire, of the *Times*), lest he reveal himself too much.

LAURENT CILLUFFO

Even at this time of war, there is little doubt among the majority of Israelis that the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip must be ended and the settlements dismantled. But who can make that happen, and how? Hardly anyone (apart from the parlor statesmen of Europe) still believes that Yasir Arafat is capable of seeking a compromise agreement or of fostering a stable polity next to his Israeli neighbor. What Arafat has fostered instead, since rejecting peace at Camp David, is a politics of ecstatic violence. When he saw that the Palestinian Authority was losing support to jihadist groups like Hamas, he set up a militia of his own, the Al Aqsa Brigades. Last week, Israeli officials said that they had discovered in his Ramallah offices a cache of documents that included an invoice from Al Aqsa to pay for, among other things, a "month's supply" of bombs. The Brigades have competed well with Hamas; they have succeeded in blowing up Israelis in such large numbers—and provoking clumsy military retaliation on such a scale—that Arafat's approval rating has soared. Such approval is a trophy to place beside his Nobel Peace Prize.

Sharon, for his part, is evoking his march to Lebanon with scant attention to how the operation will end and what comes next. Will the reoccupation of Ramallah and Nablus, Bethlehem and Tulkarm stifle terror or lead to more of it? That is a question not of appeasement but of strategic necessity. "All wars need a political objective," Yoel Marcus, a columnist for the Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'aretz*, wrote last week. "But that is precisely what Operation 'Protective Wall' lacks. Sharon has no policy or strategy for the 'day after.' "

There is no moral equivalence between Arafat and Sharon: the first thrives on the idealization of martyrdom; the


Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

"*'Giant Sequoias'—with apologies to the Encyclopaedia Britannica.*"

other now blunders while trying to stifle him. Nevertheless, history has seldom conjured two leaders less fit for their historical moment than Arafat and Sharon. (And those who stand in waiting—a murderer's row of Palestinian security chiefs and Benjamin Netanyahu—are no more promising.) Another party is needed, and this moment, like September 11th, demands American diplomacy, imagination, and intervention. President Bush was, at first, slow to engage at anywhere near the level needed. His actions, and the actions of his agencies, were contradictory and confused. One day early last week, when Bush was asked about criticism that he had not done enough to bring an end to the confrontation, he complained that in fact he had been making calls all morning. The President sounded put out; it was a tone familiar not from his best speeches after the September attacks but, rather, from his more feckless moments during the 2000 campaign.

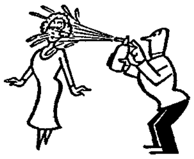
Washington's engagement in the Middle East has yielded a mixed record. Bush's father and his Secretary of State, James Baker, were notoriously uninterested in the Israelis and the Palestinian question until 1991, when they finally stirred themselves to organize the Madrid Peace Conference. Obsessed with the possibility of a final agreement, President Clinton was schooled in the dynamics and the territorial details of negotiation; and yet he failed to muster sufficient suasion to prevent the expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and the precipitous drift, among the Palestinians, toward a culture of martyrdom and a rhetoric of ruthless maximalism and anti-Semitism.

The war is hardly a limited event. Groups like Hezbollah and even Al Qaeda stand poised to take advantage and press varying nightmare agendas, to undermine relatively moderate Arab governments, or to join in a more overt assault on the very existence of Israel. "The supreme irony is that the greatest power the world has ever known has proven incapable of managing a regional crisis," Geoffrey Kemp, who led Middle East policy for the National Security Council in the Reagan Administration, told the Los Angeles *Times*. "A two-year-old could have seen this crisis coming. And the idea that it could be brushed under the carpet as the administration focused on either Afghanistan or Iraq reflects either appalling arrogance or ignorance."

Mr. Kemp was harsh, perhaps, but Mr. Bush needed rousing, and late last week he announced his own resolution to act. Not a moment too soon. The United States is the one player that, through diplomacy, economic muscle, and even the stationing of troops, if need be, can provide any hope of security and negotiation. If Israel and the Palestinians ever had a common language, they have forgotten it; without a mediator, they are lost. Until now, the President's special envoy, General Anthony Zinni, seemed to wander the offices of Jerusalem and Ramallah without much of a mission, looking for direction, lonely as a cloud. What he requires—what the security of the Middle East requires—is the full engagement of the commander-in-chief.

—*David Remnick*

THE BOARDS
BEEHIVES ON BROADWAY



This August, a musical based on "Hairspray," the John Waters movie that celebrates rigid updos and disintegrating racial segregation in early-sixties Baltimore, is coming to Broadway, and the other week a dozen or so group-sales people—responsible for ordering the big blocks of tickets that buoy a show's audience figures—came to a loft apartment in the West Twenties for a special preview. The apartment belongs to Marc Shaiman, the show's composer, and Scott Wittman, Shaiman's longtime boyfriend and collaborator, who co-wrote the lyrics with Shaiman.

While the assembled sales reps mingled in the living room, admiring the décor (a portrait by Steve DeFrank of Ken, Barbie's companion, made from Lite-Brite bulbs; fake mink throws on the armchairs), Wittman explained how he and Shaiman had built upon the movie's plot for their musical. "Our show

Microsoft

There are a lot of reasons to switch from AOL to MSN.

Here's 50 more.

Sign up for MSN® Internet Access now and get $50 back after three paid months.*

Want an Internet service you can really use? MSN has Microsoft® technology, so it's more useful and a great alternative to AOL. With MSN, you'll enjoy fast logins and fewer busy signals.† And you get the #1 search engine,‡ plus e-mail, shopping, and messenger service—right from your home page.
Call (800) 373-3676 or visit switch.msn.com

msn® ™
More Useful Everyday

*You must pay for three months of unlimited MSN Dial-up Internet Access or unlimited MSN Broadband to receive the $50 mail-in rebate. Limit one rebate per household. This rebate offer may only be combined with the One Month Dial-up Trial plan or the MSN Broadband plans available through (800) 373-3676 or at resourcecenter.msn.com. Registration for new MSN account required by May 30, 2002. †When compared to the Industry Average based on eTesting Labs Internet BenchMark Report, December 2001 24-hour Call Failure Rate. www.etestinglabs.com. ‡Jupiter Media Metrix: Custom category as defined by Microsoft, December 2001, U.S. © 2002 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, MSN, and the MSN logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

is zany, but not as madcap as the movie," he said, then added, by way of parsing the crucial zany-madcap distinction, "Ours has more of a Cinderella plot. Tracy Turnblad"—the show's happily hefty star—"loses the guy and then gets him again. It's what's inside that matters. It's a sweet little message."

The mini-show took place in the couple's soundproofed studio at the back of the apartment, which is hung with posters from films for which Shaiman composed the scores: "When Harry Met Sally," "The First Wives Club," the "South Park" movie. The presentation was a kind of "Hairspray Uncoiffed." Shaiman, who is shortish and bearded and bashful in his demeanor, rolled his desk chair from computer control deck to piano and back, pressing a few buttons here and a few keys there, but mostly just hovering and bouncing up and down. Wittman, who is tall and silver-haired and wore a candy-striped Paul Smith shirt with the print of its contrasting inner cuff artfully exposed, perched on a nearby stool.

Marc Shaiman

Shaiman started off with a recording of Marissa Jaret Winokur, the actress playing Tracy, belting out her first number, "Good Morning Baltimore," a Phil Spectorish hymn to John Waters's inspirational home town. "Tracy is our Dolly, our Mame, full of life and full of love, and she will be the one to touch everyone around her," Shaiman said as he set the scene. "We see her going off to school, and she has a little bird on her finger, like Mary Poppins. And when she sprays her hair the bird dies." Then Shaiman played a recording of "I Can Hear the Bells," which Tracy sings after Link, her future beau, first brushes up against her, and which involves countless synonyms for "touched," including "nudged," "knocked," and "pushed." "She takes it as a statement of true love, and so she sings a song about spousal abuse, basically," Shaiman said.

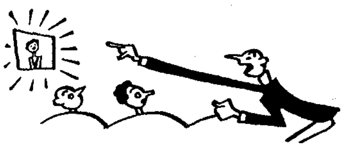
The sales reps seemed to be enjoying themselves. One, who buys tickets for the Y.W.C.A. and later introduced herself as "the other Jennifer Lopez," was practically doing the hand jive to a tape of "Welcome to the Sixties," a number performed by Harvey Fierstein in the role of Edna Turnblad, Tracy's mother, who was massively incarnated in the movie by Divine. ("John Waters wanted Anthony Hopkins, but when he heard Harvey he fell in love," Wittman said.) For Seaweed, Tracy's black friend, Shaiman had composed a Temptations-like number called "Run and Tell That," whose refrain includes the words "The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice." After playing the song, Shaiman went to a bookshelf and pulled down a volume. "'Run and tell that' was an expression black folk used in the sixties, and Scott and I know that because we read this book," he said, holding up the volume, entitled "Black Talk." "I read that on the subway," Wittman added. "*That* was an interesting experience."

When it came time to showcase "Big, Blond, and Beautiful," the signature tune of Motormouth Maybelle, the black d.j., who was played by the R. & B. singer Ruth Brown in the movie, Shaiman dispensed with a recorded vocal and performed the song himself. He threw his arms wide and, summoning an unlikely blues-diva persona, delivered lines like "Scoop me up a mess of that chocolate swirl / And don't be stingy, I'm a growing girl" and "I need a man who brings a man-sized appetite." At one point in the song, he caught sight of Wittman and blushed, planting his palms on his face. At the end of the number, Shaiman collapsed on the floor while growling Motormouth's last line—"Someone go get me some of that cheesecake." The sales reps applauded heartily as he rose and brushed himself off. "I've never been so embarrassed and exhilarated at the same time," he said.

Afterward, the other Jennifer Lopez said that "Hairspray" was a perfect fit with the mission of the Y.W.C.A.—"It's all about female empowerment and racial harmony"—and would, she was sure, go down well with her subscribers. She said, "Last year, we bought 'Mamma Mia!,' and they were dancing in the aisles."

—*Rebecca Mead*

YOU NEVER KNOW DEPT.
A RELUCTANT POSTER GIRL



Contrary to what riders waiting for the crosstown bus at Amsterdam Avenue and Eighty-sixth Street have been led to believe, Dana Fisher would not, if she had a million dollars, "buy a car and a cute driver to go with it." That is the quote attributed to her on the New York Lotto ad that dominates the bus shelter. And that is Fisher's smiling face and, alongside it, her first name. But it is not her sentiment. It is, in fact, the opposite of her sentiment. And it has created some controversy among Fisher's colleagues at Columbia University's environmental-policy-studies program.

Fisher is a visiting scholar at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and she studies global climate change. "It's relatively dry and boring," she said the other day. An energetic young woman with wavy dark hair and a quick laugh, she will be presenting a paper this summer at the American Sociological Association's meeting in Chicago, demonstrating, she says, that "vehicle travel per capita is the strongest predictor of CO_2 emissions per capita." In other words, individuals driving cars are the biggest culprits in global warming. "I don't have a car or want a car in this city," Fisher said. "I use my dad's car when I need a car."

Fisher's involuntary journey across the ideological spectrum began in December, while she was shopping in Herald Square. "There was a stand set up and they kept playing that 'If I Had a Million Dollars' song"—the Barenaked Ladies hit that inspired the new Lotto commercials. "The people at the stand said, 'Would you like a drink'—I think it was a Snapple—'and

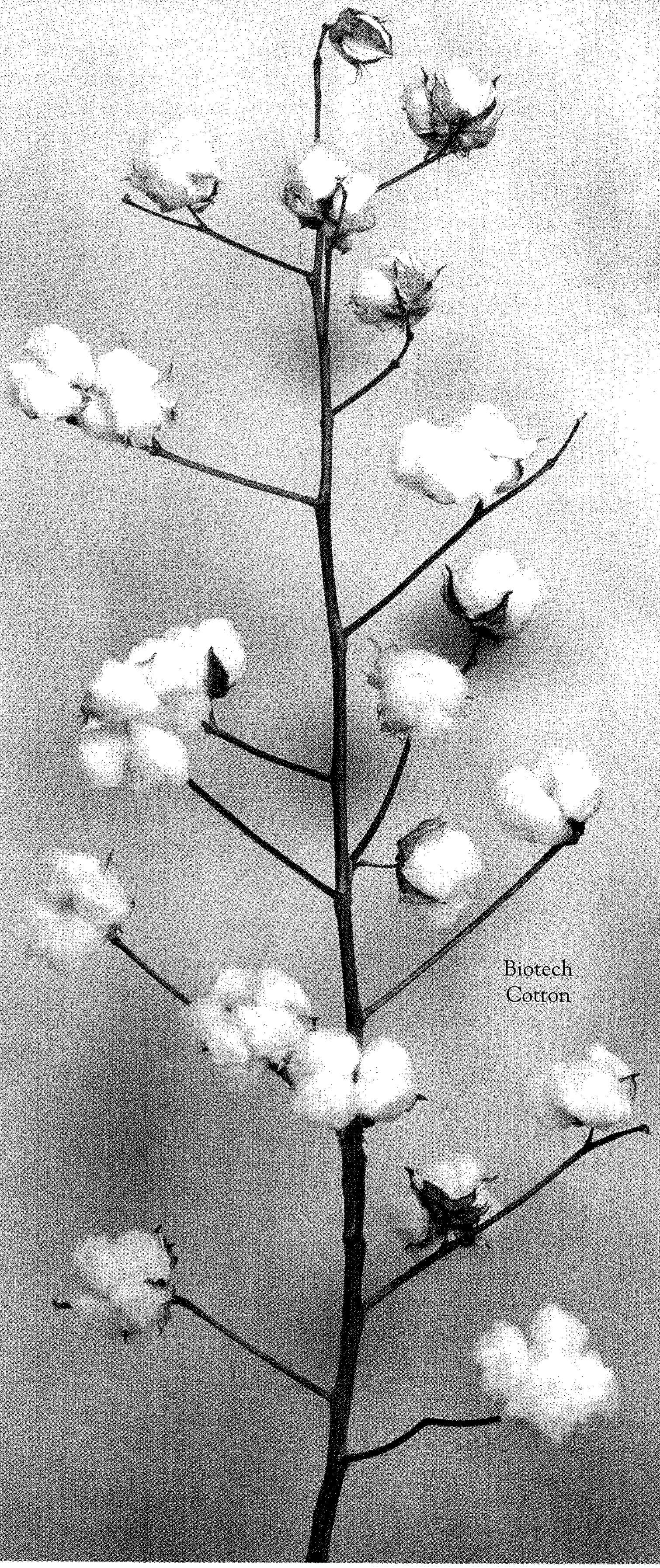
TOM BACHTELL

WOULD IT SURPRISE YOU TO KNOW THAT ONE WAY TO GET RID OF BUGS IS TO SPRAY LESS?

Advancements in plant biotechnology mean that we can now grow crops that are protected from insect pests, which means less spraying across our country's farmland. In fact, biotech crops, like cotton, require less spraying than before.*

If you want to learn more, we invite you to call us or visit our Web site.

WWW.WHYBIOTECH.COM
1-800-980-8660



COUNCIL FOR
BIOTECHNOLOGY
INFORMATION

good ideas are growing

---

*National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy Report.

a lottery ticket? Let us take your picture so you can be eligible for our ad campaign.' I'm, like, 'Sure, I'm thirsty.' " In answer to the question "What would you do if you had a million dollars?" Fisher wrote on a sheet of paper, "Establish a foundation that would deal with global environmental issues." "I remember thinking, Maybe they'll pick me, just because I had this very altruistic, socially responsible answer."

Two weeks ago, a student raised her hand in a seminar on climate-change policy that Fisher is teaching, and said, "You know, there's a model who looks just like you in this ad I saw." Since Fisher had never heard back from the Lottery people, who had promised to pay her two hundred dollars if she was selected, she didn't make the connection. A few days later, however, an assistant dean also mentioned the ad—and the part about buying a car and a cute guy to drive it. That weekend, a program assistant at the school sent an e-mail message to some fifty students and professors with the subject line "prof dana fisher's FACE is on a BUS STOP."

Fisher began to grow concerned. "I was about to sign my contract here at Columbia, and my grant money is coming from the Earth Institute," she said. "I was thinking, I've got to sign my contract before they see this ad."

Eventually, a letter of congratulations, along with a check, arrived for Fisher from the Lottery's ad agency, DDB Worldwide. She immediately called the phone number on the letter. "The woman at the ad agency said, 'Oh, we didn't use almost anybody's quote, and you signed a release.' Then she said, 'That's advertising!' " (This was news to the Lotto people. A spokeswoman for the Lottery said that the quotes were meant to be "one hundred per cent" real: "That's what makes the campaign the success it is—that every element of it is genuine.")

Fisher's brother-in-law, a litigator, suggested that the agency had used her name and likeness in a misleading manner that could be damaging to her reputation. But Fisher decided to live with it. "I don't want to go down that road," she said. "I will never be on a New York City billboard again as long as I live, so I kind of figure, eh." And she just heard from the Lotto people again. They told her that DDB was going to send someone around the city to put a sticker bearing her real quote over the "car and a cute driver" line.

The experience has made Fisher wonder about the quotes on the seven hundred and ninety-seven other Lotto ads around the city. Are they fictional, too? "There's an older woman on one poster," Fisher said. "Her quote says she'd buy a house where she could live with her grandkids. And I'm thinking, Hmm. Does she even have grandkids? She might be sad and alone and live with a lot of cats. Or she could be a lesbian who never had children."

As for the two hundred dollars, Fisher said, "I'm probably going to use it to pay my credit-card bills."

—*Daniel Radosh*

SHEEP'S CLOTHING DEPT.

BABES IN BURBERRY

Burberry's West Fifty-seventh Street store gave a supremely planned party for a bunch of preschoolers and their mothers last week, to launch a new line of toiletries for children called Burberry Baby Touch. On the second floor, several long, low tables had been set with tablecloths, paper plates, and napkins, in the Baby Touch colors of baby blue, apple green, ivory, and lilac. These were piled with platters of large sugar cookies in the shape of lambs, dishes of ice cream, and little mountains of decorative sweets—lilac and blue sprinkles, mini marshmallow dots, raisins, miniature M&M's, Gummy Bears, and cans of Reddi Wip.

The cleanest, rosiest, best-groomed, most splendidly dressed small fry in the universe wandered passively and silently in, marshalled by their mothers and greeted by Burberry staffers, who raised their voices to unnaturally high, shrill octaves to signify surprise, delight, and welcome. White-clad waiters offered trays of lemonade and inch-square cucumber and egg-salad tea sandwiches (no peanut butter and jelly, to protect against possible allergic reactions). A couple of fat, bored-looking sheep, with Burberry-classic checked cashmere scarves tied around their necks, stood around in a wire-fenced pen, in the care of a young man wearing overalls and a straw farmer's hat. Hopsack bags filled with corn were placed strategically nearby. A three-year-old named Molly, in a smocked pink dress, dipped thumb and forefinger into the corn, pulled out a kernel, and, through the wire fencing, offered it to one of the sheep. It was taken and munched. Molly watched without expression.

"Molly loves the Burberry lamb," said Molly's mother, who was clearly her spokesperson. Molly said nothing.

"I bet Molly would love to decorate a cookie," a staffer said. "Come on, Molly," she said, leading the child to a cookie table. The staffer covered a lamb cookie with Reddi Wip and stuck on about fifty marshmallows followed by globs of lilac sprinkles.

"John wants to decorate a cookie," said another spokesperson, John's mother. John, who looked to be three and a half years old, was watching a two-year-old next to him try to pick up a Gummy Bear with a plastic spoon. "John is obsessed with younger children," his mother said.

"Look, make a crown, a gold crown," a staffer said to another little girl in pink. "Put stickers on it. It's fun." The girl backed off. "I like your dress," said the staffer.

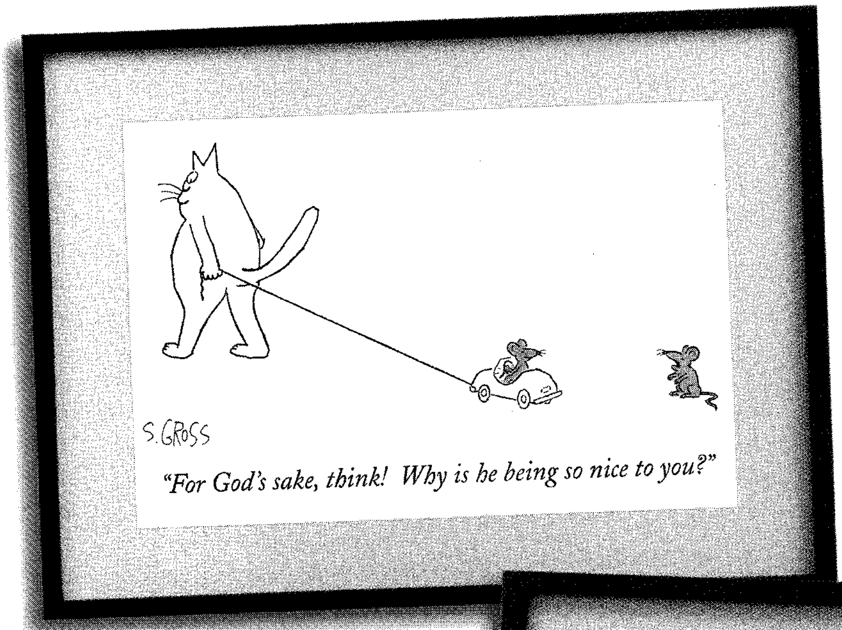
"It's an Anthea Moore Ede," the little girl's mother said. "Custom-made. In London. My daughter just got into the Episcopal School. A lot of us here are from Episcopal."

At the other end of the room, a group of three-year-olds and their mothers seemed to be listening as Burberry executives described the virtues of Baby Touch. "Two fragrances, one with alcohol, at thirty-eight dollars, one without, at thirty-two," a gentleman in a blue pinstriped suit said. "Our toilet water is delicate. It's got citrus fruit, mint, rhubarb, orange blossom, jasmine, lily of the valley, and even a touch of milk." He offered samples to small arms. The kids stared at him.

Eugenia Ulasewicz, the president of Burberry, a handsome red-haired woman wearing handsome red-framed eyeglasses and dressed head to toe in Burberry—jacket, pants, bag, umbrella—took over. "They've got to go and get their faces painted by the face painters!" she said. "They've got to make ice-cream sundaes!" The group disbanded. A child sitting on a life-size toy lamb tumbled off and, with the lamb, fell over. Another child tried to grab a large cluster of bal-

ADVERTISEMENT

THE NEW YORKER CARTOONS & COVERS AVAILABLE AT THE CARTOON BANK


S. GROSS
"For God's sake, think! Why is he being so nice to you?"

Sam Gross 1998 (ACTUAL SIZE 11" x 14")

The Cartoon Bank is your only source for framed and matted New Yorker cartoon prints. We have the largest, most comprehensive collection of published New Yorker cartoons in the world. And now we offer selected New Yorker covers, too.

Order online at **cartoonbank.com** or by phone at 1-800-897-TOON (8666). And if you don't see the cartoon or cover you want online, let us search our in-house archive. Our specialists are always eager to help.

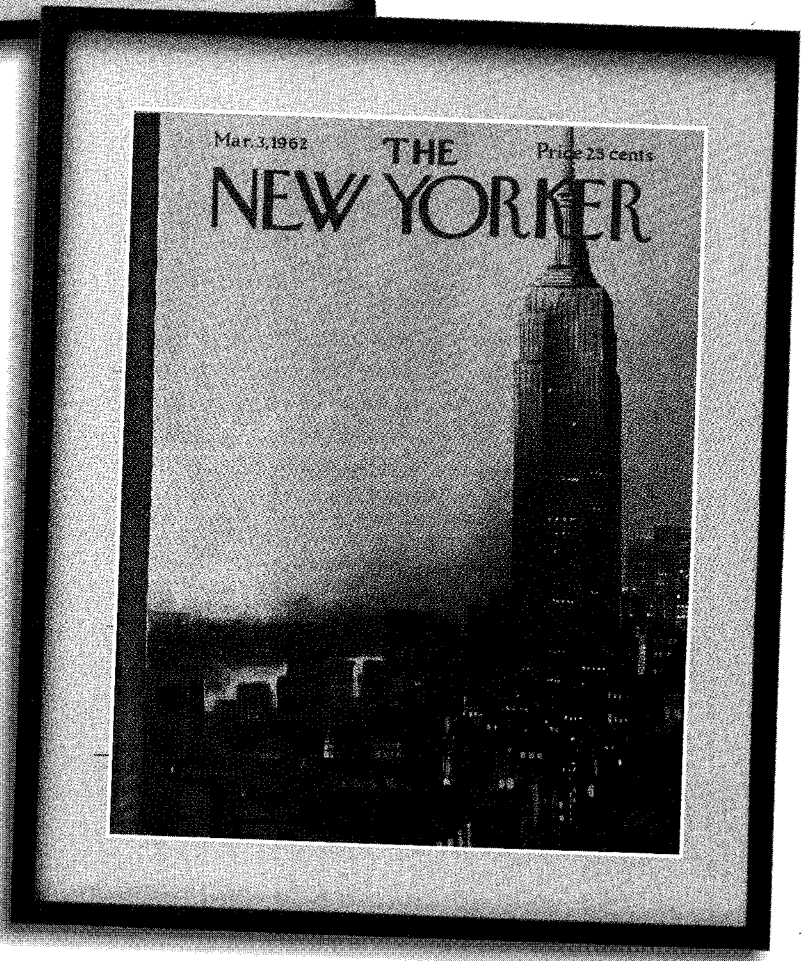
CARTOON PRINTS

Stop snipping cartoons from the magazine. Buy a framed or matted print. Classic black wood frame with off-white rag mat, $195. Matted only, $125. Plus shipping & handling.

NEW VINTAGE COVER COLLECTION

Cover connoisseurs, rejoice! Beautiful color New Yorker cover prints now available. Featuring selected artists from 1925 to 1992. Black frame with mat, $350. Matted only, $250. Plus shipping & handling.

Can't decide which cartoon print or cover to send? Send a Cartoon Bank gift certificate instead. It's the perfect gift for any occasion.



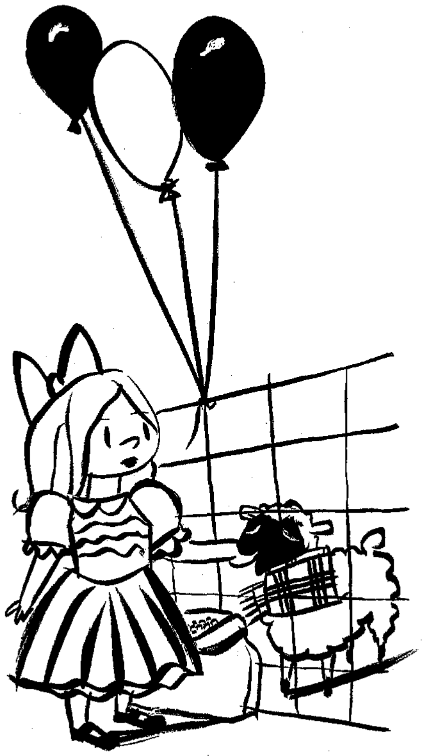
Arthur Getz 1962 (ACTUAL SIZE 23" x 29")

CARTOONBANK.COM
A New Yorker Magazine Company

145 PALISADE STREET, SUITE 373 • DOBBS FERRY, NY 10522 • 1-800-897-TOON • toon@cartoonbank.com

© 2001 THE CARTOON BANK. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

loons, got tangled up in them, and pulled them down. The party seemed to be losing unity. Just then, in walked Peggy Siegal, the P.R. specialist from the world of entertainment, looking sleek and tan, and calling for Harriet Weintraub, the P.R. specialist from the world of fashion, who had organized the Baby Touch party.

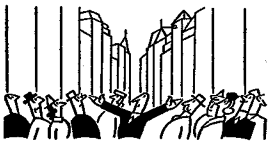


A Burberry tot

“I just got back from the Oscars,” Siegal said. “Harriet is my new partner. Harriet has grandchildren at Dalton.” She looked around the room and gave a loud laugh at a little boy who, looking apprehensive, was loading fistfuls of marshmallows into his mouth. “Good baby touch,” she said. “I love young children,” she said. “This is my favorite kind of party.”

—*Lillian Ross*

HORIZON DEPT.
LIGHTS OUT



When the idea of evoking the towers of the World Trade Center by projecting two powerful beams of light into the sky was first proposed, right after September 11th, John Bennett, one of the architects who came up with the notion, said, “It will definitely not be a tourist attraction.” He was wrong. The lights went on for the first time on the night of March 11th, six months after the towers fell, and every night since then crowds have been swarming to the corner of West and Murray Streets, in Battery Park City, just a block or so from Ground Zero, where eighty-eight enormous searchlights point upward. Bennett thought that people would want to see the lights from afar, but they seem to be drawn to the source. It isn't that they flock to light like moths. It's more that the lights have given people the first chance since September 11th to feel that going to the neighborhood of the World Trade Center can be uplifting, not disquieting.

The other night, just before sundown, Bennett, who is thirty-four, and his partner, Gustavo Bonevardi, who is forty-two, were having a drink at Roc, a restaurant at the corner of Duane and Greenwich Streets that has a great view of the lights. They had gone there to toast the project the night the lights were first turned on, and now they were contemplating the project's obsolescence.

The lights were always intended to be temporary, and no one expected that they would become an instant landmark, the best abstract monument in this country since Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington D.C. Now that the lights are in the final week of their monthlong run, Bennett and Bonevardi are beginning to have second thoughts about whether it makes sense to cart them away so quickly. “We conceived of it as a momentary thing, as a rush of energy, to help get the city going again,” Bonevardi said. “But I think we have to recognize the effect it has had on people.”

By then it had got dark, and you could see the lights through the front window of the restaurant: two huge bluish-white beams, shooting straight into the sky. Bennett and Bonevardi got up and walked outside onto Greenwich Street. The sidewalk was crowded with people, many of them carrying cameras, headed down toward the lights. Bonevardi looked up and saw a star. “It's a good night,” he said.

“On a cloudy night, you can't see it from far away, but up close it looks almost solid, more like a building,” Bennett said.

“I like the way the different lights give you a feeling of the striations of the façade of the World Trade Center—that's subtle, but it's really important to me,” Bonevardi said. The architects turned right at Murray Street, walked past a woman who was drawing the lights on a sketchpad, and slipped through a gate. In front of them were two platforms made of metal scaffolding, each fifty feet square—roughly one-sixteenth the area of a floor in one of the towers. The platforms are placed corner to corner, about a hundred and fifty feet apart, approximately the same distance that separated the real towers. They share the site with a huge white tent that was put up as a feeding area for rescue workers shortly after September 11th. The tent is due to be dismantled soon, and the Battery Park City Authority wants the land back, which is one of the reasons the lights are scheduled to go off after April 13th.

Each platform contains forty-four rented searchlights, many of which were shipped to New York after lighting the Salt Lake City Olympics. Each light throws off seven thousand watts. When you stand on the platform, however, the light level is dim—it's like being in the eye of a storm. The lights shoot up all around you and the beams appear to converge as they rise, so the view upward is sort of like the inside of a celestial Maypole. In the middle of one of the platforms is a small plastic tent housing a computer that controls the lights. “Searchlights like these are designed to shift and move and change colors,” Bennett said. “But the whole point here is that they don't move at all. The guy who runs it says it's one of the easiest jobs he's had in his life.”

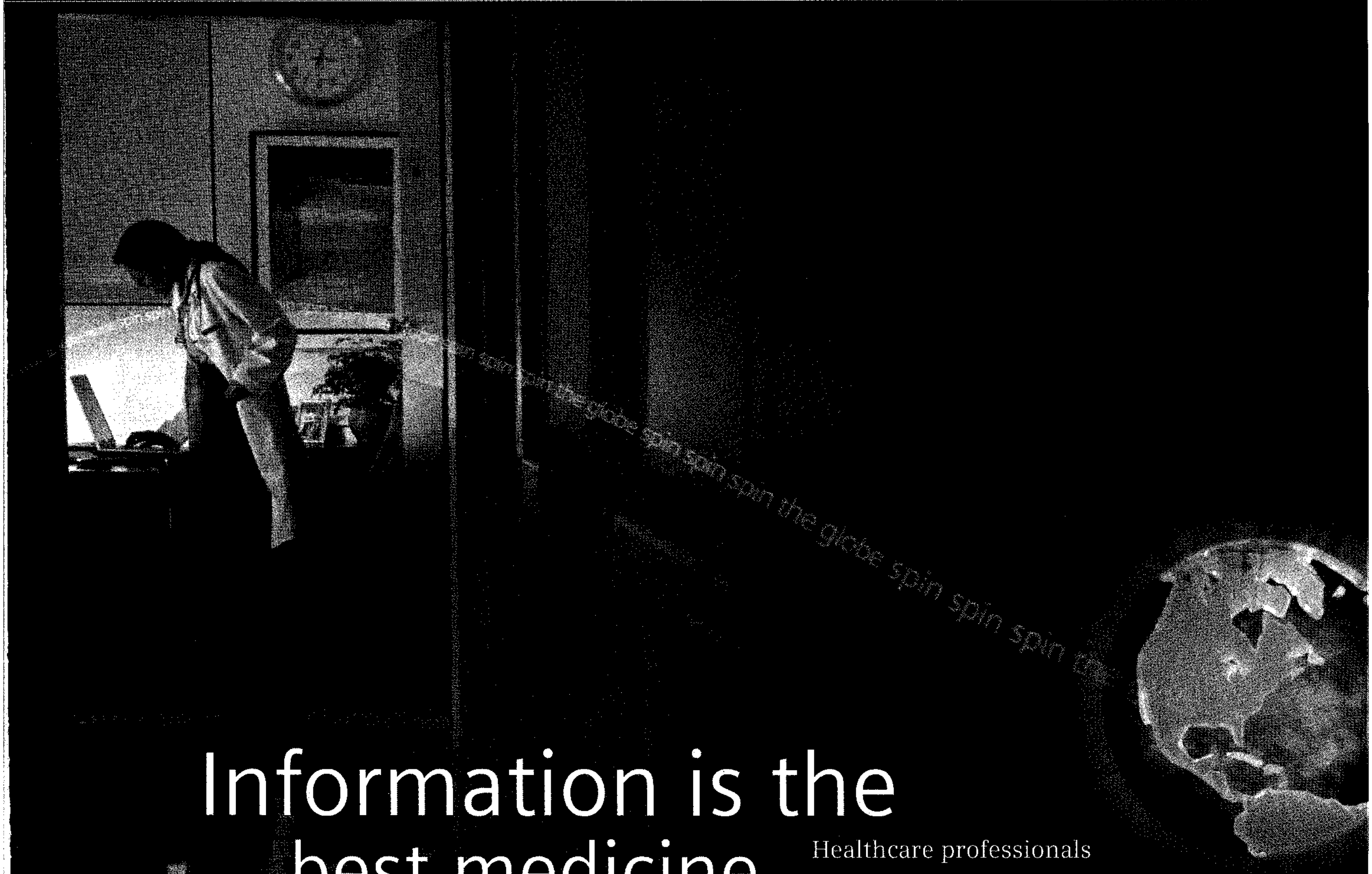
A week or so ago, Mayor Bloomberg said he was open to the idea of reërecting the lights, perhaps at another site near Ground Zero. No one has figured out how to pay for it—the costs for the first month were paid by a few philanthropic citizens and foundations, and Con Edison picked up the electric bill—but it is easy to imagine people stepping forward to help. (One night's worth of electricity costs around three hundred dollars.)

“One night we were looking at it and the moon was out,” Bonevardi said. “And it moved into the path of the lights, and it looked like we had lit up the moon.”

—*Paul Goldberger*

TOM BACHTELL

energy & power • industry & automation • information & communication • medical systems & healthcare • financing • lighting • transportation


spin spin the globe spin spin spin the globe spin spin spin

Information is the best medicine.

Healthcare professionals perform best when they're well informed. By successfully integrating medical and information technologies, Siemens provides physicians and health executives with instant access to critical information so they can make the right decisions right away. From medication management systems to networked imaging systems, Siemens provides medical solutions to improve workflow, reduce costs and, most importantly, make cutting-edge care available to everyone, everywhere.

Whether enhancing the quality and efficiency of healthcare, developing transportation systems that make travel safer and more reliable or being the world leader in logic controllers for industrial automation, Siemens is reshaping and redefining entire industries. When you have 460,000 minds working together all around the globe, including 85,000 right here in the U.S., innovative solutions emerge. And that's what it takes to change the world.

SIEMENS

Global network of innovation

© Siemens Corporation, 2001

www.usa.siemens.com

ANNALS OF GASTRONOMY

DON'T MENTION IT

The hidden life and times of a Greenwich Village restaurant.

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

I suppose Kenny Shopsin, who runs a small restaurant a couple of blocks from where I live in Greenwich Village, could qualify as eccentric in a number of ways, but one of his views seems particularly strange to journalists who have had prolonged contact with proprietors of retail businesses in New York: he hates publicity. I've tried not to take this personally. I have been a regular customer, mainly at lunch, since 1982, when Kenny and his wife, Eve, turned a corner grocery store they had been running on the same premises into a thirty-four-seat café. Before that, I was a regular customer of the grocery store. When the transformation was made, my daughters were around junior-high-school age, and even now, grown and living out of the city, they consider Shopsin's General Store—or Ken and Eve's or Kenny's, as they usually call it—an extension of their kitchen. Normally, they take only a brief glance at the menu—a menu that must include about nine hundred items, some of them as unusual as Cotton Picker Gumbo Melt Soup or Hanoi Hoppin John with Shrimp or Bombay Turkey Cloud Sandwich—and then order dishes that are not listed, such as "tomato soup the way Sarah likes it" or "Abigail's chow fun."

When Kenny gets a phone call from a restaurant guidebook that wants to include Shopsin's, he sometimes says that the place is no longer in operation, identifying himself as someone who just happens to be there moving out the fixtures. Some years ago, a persistent English guidebook carried a generally complimentary review of Shopsin's that started with a phrase like "Although it has no décor." Eve expressed outrage, not simply at the existence of the review but also at its content. "Do you call this 'no décor'?" she demanded of me one evening when I was there having an early supper—the only kind of supper you can have at Shopsin's, which has not strayed far from grocery-store hours. (Aside from a Sunday brunch that began as a sort of family project several months ago, the restaurant has never been open on weekends.) She waved her arm to take in the entire establishment.

Junior Mints
Junior Mints
Mini BURGER
CHOCOLATE POP
Mini BURGER

Kenny Shopsin and his wife, Eve. Their place still looks a lot like a corner store. Photograph by Jeff Mermelstein.

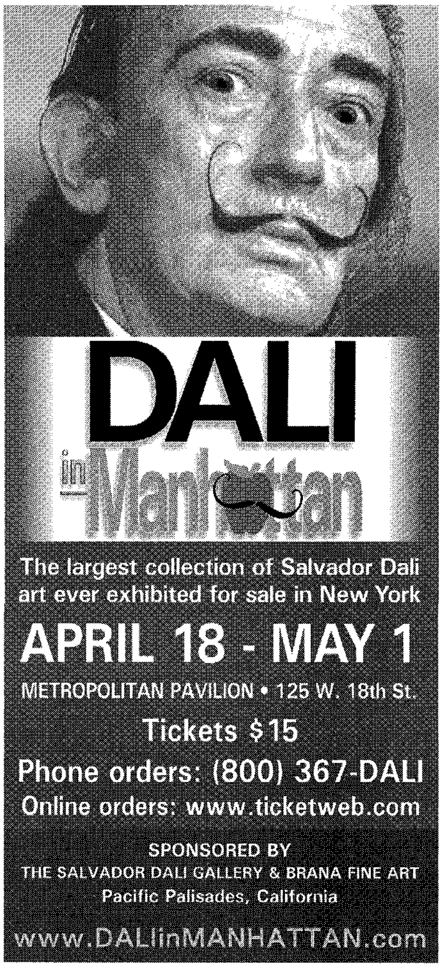
I looked around. Shopsin's still looks a lot like a corner store. It has an old pressed-tin ceiling. There are shelves, left over from the grocery store, that are always piled high and not terribly neatly with ingredients and supplies. There are always newspapers and magazines around for the customer who might need reading material while eating alone. A table setup might include a constantly varying assortment of toys and puzzles—a custom that started when the Shopsins' children were young and continues for the more or less grownup customers. The counter, which no longer has stools, is taken up mainly by buckets of complimentary penny candy. One wall has, in addition to a three-dimensional advertisement for Oscar Mayer beef franks, some paintings of the place and its denizens. The portrait of Kenny shows him as a bushy-haired man with a baby face that makes him look younger than he is, which is nearly sixty, and a girth that may reflect years of tasting his more remarkable creations; he's wearing a Shopsin's General Store T-shirt, folded over in the way the cognoscenti know how to fold it in order to form the words "Eat Me." A large sign behind the tiny kitchen that Kenny shares with his longtime assistant, José, says "All Our Cooks Wear Condoms." When I had taken in all of that, or whatever part of it was there at the time, I said, "I absolutely agree, Eve. A reviewer might comment on whether or not the décor is to his taste. Conceivably, he could prefer another type of décor. But you can't say that this place has no décor."

Normally, mentions of Shopsin's in print are complimentary, in a sort of left-handed way—as in *Time Out New York's* most recent guide to the city's restaurants, which raved about the soups and described Kenny ("the foul-mouthed middle-aged chef and owner") as "a culinary genius, if for no other reason than he figured out how to fit all his ingredients into such a tiny restaurant." To Kenny's way of thinking, a complimentary mention is worse than a knock. It brings review-trotters—the sort of people who go to a restaurant because somebody told them to. Kenny finds that review-trotters are often "petulant and demanding." Failing to understand that they are not in a completely conventional restaurant, they may be taken aback at having the person next to them contribute a sentence or two to their conversation or at hearing Kenny make a general remark in language not customarily heard in company unless the company is in a locker room or at being faced with deciding among nine hundred items and then, if they have selected certain dishes, having to indicate the degree of spiciness on a scale of one to ten. (Before Shopsin's began restricting its serving staff to Eve, it employed a waitress who narrowed at least that choice by refusing to take an order higher than a six, on humanitarian grounds.)

Ken and Eve have found that review-trotters often don't know their own minds. If a customer at Shopsin's seems completely incapable of deciding what to order, Eve will, in the interest of saving time, reveal her own favorites, which these days happen to be three dishes with chicken in them—Chicken Tortilla Avocado Soup, Pecan Chicken Wild Rice Cream Enchilada, and Taco Fried Chicken. But she doesn't do it with a song in her heart. Kenny is less flexible. "If somebody comes in here and is flabbergasted by the number of things on the menu and tells me, 'How can I choose?'" he has said, "I realize that they're essentially in the wrong restaurant."

The place can handle just so many people, and Kenny was never interested in an expansion that would transform him into a supervisor. "The economic rhythm of this place is that I run fifteen meals a week," he used to say before Shopsin's offered Sunday brunch. "If I do any five of them big, I break even; if I do ten of them big, I'll make money. I'll make a lot of money. But if I do fifteen I have to close, because it's too much work." Kenny requires slow periods for recouping energy and ingredients. The techniques that enable him to offer as many dishes as he does are based on the number of people he has to serve rather than on what they order. That's why he won't do takeout, and that's one of the reasons parties of five are told firmly that the restaurant does not serve groups larger than four. Pretending to be a party of three that happened to have come in with a party of two is a very bad idea.

Not all the rules at Shopsin's are based on the number of meals that the kitchen has to put out. For years, a rule against copying your neighbor's order was observed fairly strictly. Customers who had just arrived might ask some-


DALI in Manhattan
The largest collection of Salvador Dali art ever exhibited for sale in New York
APRIL 18 - MAY 1
METROPOLITAN PAVILION • 125 W. 18th St.
Tickets $15
Phone orders: (800) 367-DALI
Online orders: www.ticketweb.com
SPONSORED BY
THE SALVADOR DALI GALLERY & BRANA FINE ART
Pacific Palisades, California
www.DALIinMANHATTAN.com

Euro Bike & Walking Tours
Offering Luxury European biking and walking tours since 1974 for all levels of experience
For free full color catalog
call 1-800-321-6060
www.eurobike.com e-mail: info@eurobike.com

Healthy Solutions *for* Losing Weight
STRUCTURE · HOUSE ·
◆ Physical Health
◆ Emotional Renewal
◆ Beautiful Surroundings
◆ Personal Support
800.553.0052 ◆ http:www.StructureHouse.com

LONDON
Short Term Rental Private Flats & Houses
TOLL FREE 1-800 748 9783
TEL: +44 (0) 20 7233 8111 FAX: +44 (0) 20 7233 9101
E-mail: info@homefromhome.co.uk
Internet: www.HFHLondon.com
Home From Home

RUNNING SHOE PENDANT
A sure winner designed and made in our workshop. Sterling silver on 18" chain $40 or 14k gold $232. Add $5 handling. Also as a pin. Catalog available. 800-767-6411 or web: breakell.com
J.H. Breakell & Co.
132 Spring St., Dept. NYRS, Newport, RI 02840

one at the next table the name of the scrumptious-looking dish he was eating. Having learned that it was Burmese Hummus—one of my favorites, as it happens, even though it is not hummus and would not cause pangs of nostalgia in the most homesick Burmese—they might order Burmese Hummus, only to have Eve shake her head wearily. No copying. That rule eventually got downgraded into what Ken called "a strong tradition," and has now pretty much gone by the wayside. "I realized that the problem was not that they were trying to imitate the other person but that they weren't capable of ordering anything themselves, and it was just unnecessary cruelty to point that out to them," Kenny told me not long ago. He said he was getting more and more people of that sort.

"Why is that?" I asked.

"The country's going that way," he said glumly.

Because Shopsin's has a number of rules and because Kenny is, by his own admission, "not a patient person," it's common to run into people who are afraid to enter the place. I've escorted a number of them to their first Shopsin's meal, in the way a longtime businessman in a Midwestern town might escort a newcomer to Kiwanis at noon on Wednesday. Since the "Seinfeld" Soup Nazi episode became part of the culture, people sometimes compare Kenny to the brilliant but rule-obsessed soup purveyor who terrified Jerry Seinfeld and his friends. Kenny would say that one difference between him and the Soup Nazi is that the Soup Nazi is shown ladling out his soup from a steam table; at Shopsin's, most soups are made from scratch when they're ordered.

Some people think of Shopsin's as forbiddingly clubby, chilly to outsiders. Actually, Shopsin's does not have a crowd, in the sense of a group of people who go in assuming they'll run into someone they know—the way the old Lion's Head, a few blocks uptown, had a crowd, built around *Village Voice* writers. At a play reading once, I was surprised to run into a Shopsin's regular I hadn't realized was an actor; all I'd known about him was that he doted on a dish called Turkey Spinach Cashew Brown Rice Burrito. Still, there are a lot of regulars, and they seem more at home than they might at a conventional restaurant. "You're really not allowed to be anonymous here," Kenny has said. "You have to be willing to be who you really are. And that scares a lot of people." One evening, when the place was nearly full, I saw a party of four come in the door; a couple of them may have been wearing neckties, which wouldn't have been a plus in a restaurant whose waitress used to wear a T-shirt that said "Die Yuppie Scum." Kenny took a quick glance from the kitchen and said, "No, we're closed." After a brief try at appealing the decision, the party left, and the waitress pulled the security gate partway down to discourage other latecomers.

"It's only eight o'clock," I said to Kenny.

"They were nothing but strangers," he said.

"I think those are usually called customers," I said. "They come here, you give them food, they give you money. It's known as the restaurant business."

Kenny shrugged. "Fuck 'em," he said.

Anytime there seemed to be a threat of my becoming entangled in a piece of unauthorized publicity about Shopsin's, I have resorted to rank cowardice, spooked by the fear of a lifetime banishment that might not even carry the possibility of parole. Once, I asked Kenny if an acquaintance of mine who'd been eighty-sixed some years before but greatly missed the place and its proprietors could come in for lunch with me sometime. "Sure, she can come in for lunch," Kenny said. "And I'll tell her she's a scumbag bitch." I told him I might hold off on that lunch for a while.

In the mid-nineties, I got a phone call from a reporter named D. T. Max, who was doing a piece for the New York *Observer* on Shopsin's, without the coöperation of the proprietor. After assuring him of my belief that reporters have an obligation to talk to other reporters on the record and informing him that I had been quoted by name insulting most of the people I've ever worked for, I told him that in this instance I intended to be exceedingly circumspect and to keep Kenny informed of everything I said. Max was most understanding.

When I did report back to Kenny, I was asked what information I had surrendered. "Well, the subject of Egyptian Burritos came up," I said. Egyptian Burrito was then listed on the breakfast menu, although I'd never eaten one. On the rare occasions that I had been to Shopsin's for what people in some other trades might call a breakfast meeting, I'd always allocated my calories to Shred Potatoes, a fabulous dish that Kenny claims to have stolen from a short-order cook in the Carolinas through intense observation that required only ten minutes.

THE BOY WITH HIS MOTHER INSIDE HIM

You said meet me by the harbor church, tide wall, little beach,
and while I waited I walked into the water, salt in the flare

of my jeans. A light went on in the house next door,
a stranger was further down the shore, no moon, ocean quiet

with me waiting. When I stood, I felt the darkness of the tar,
and then the darkness of the night, and then you were behind the turn

of my head, behind my one Heidi-ponytail, behind my green
corduroy jacket, the night like a big hat on my head

turned with me to see you.

—*Kelle Groom*

"And?" Kenny asked.

"Well, he seemed interested in what an Egyptian Burrito was," I said.

"So what did you say?"

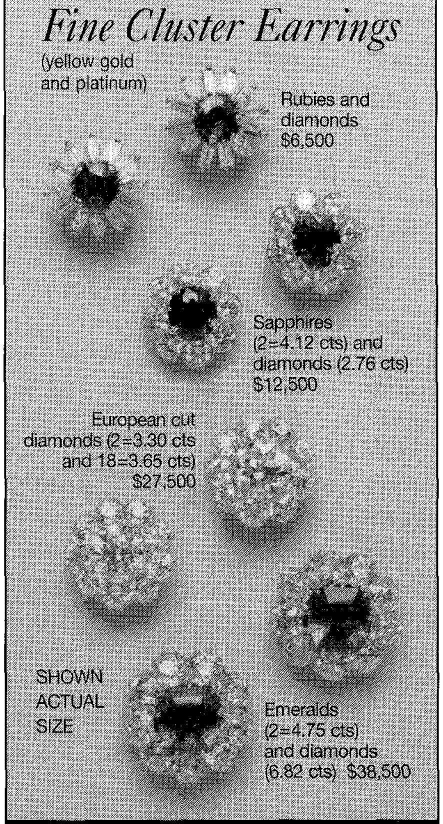
"I said, 'An Egyptian Burrito is a burrito, and inside is sort of what Kenny thinks Egyptians might eat.' "

Kenny considered that for a moment. "Well, that's accurate," he finally said. He sounded relieved. By chance, though, the *Observer* piece ended with an anecdote, accurately gathered from someone else, that involved me: One morning, a Sanitation Department officer had come in to ticket Kenny for some minor infraction like wrapping his garbage incorrectly or putting it in the wrong place. Kenny, who was at the stove, lost his temper and threw a handful of flour he happened to be holding at the sanitation officer, who thereupon summoned a police officer to write a citation. When I was told about the incident at lunch that day, I asked Kenny, "What was the citation for—assault with intent to bake?" A couple of months after Max's piece appeared, Kenny said he had finally concluded that I, frustrated at not having been able to work the assault-with-intent-to-bake line in anywhere, might have instigated an article in the *Observer* just to get it into print. I had a defense for that: within days of my exchange with Kenny about flour-throwing, I had, without mentioning any names, eased the anecdote into a newspaper column that was on a completely different subject.

Yes, I've managed to write about Shopsin's from time to time, always observing the prohibition against mentioning its name or location. That is one reason I've never been offended by Kenny's refusal to recognize a reporter's God-given right to turn absolutely everything into copy. In a piece about Greenwich Village a few years ago, for instance, I asked a restaurant proprietor "who tends not to be cordial to people wearing suits" what the difference was between the Village and uptown, and he said, "I don't know. I've never been uptown." Kenny has never objected to any of the mentions. He has always thought of us as being in similar fields, and, as someone who has to be prepared every day to turn out any one of nine hundred dishes a customer might ask for, he has a deep understanding of waste not, want not.

In the mid-seventies, in fact, when my daughters were little girls, I wrote an entire article for this magazine about a corner store in the West Village which was run with rare imagination and a warm feeling for community—a store with a rocking chair and bean-counting contests and free circulating paperback books. At that time, the store struck me as being about as close as Greenwich Village got to the Village conjured up by reading, say, "My Sister Eileen"—even to the point of having a proprietor, described in the piece as a young man from a prosperous background who'd always had what he called "a little trouble with authority," capable of making occasional allusions to Camus or Sartre as he sliced the roast beef. At the time, Kenny owned some dazzling old gumball machines, and I simply referred to Shopsin's by the name my girls always used—the Bubble Gum Store.

So why am I calling it Shopsin's now? Because not long ago Kenny told me that it was no longer necessary to abide by the rule against mentioning the place in print. The building that Shopsin's is in, an undistinguished five-story brick structure that consists of the restaurant and eight apartments, changed hands several months ago. Kenny, who was faced with having to renegotiate his lease, at first treated the situation philosophically. When I asked him what the new owner, Robert A. Cohen, of R. A. Cohen & Associates, was like, he shrugged and said, "He's a real-estate guy," in the tone that New Yorkers customarily use to mean that asking for further details would be naïve. Then Kenny and Cohen had a meeting at Cohen's office. ("I went uptown!" Kenny told me, as a way of emphasizing a willingness to put himself out.) According to Kenny, Cohen offered the Shopsins a one-year lease at more or less market rent. He also offered a three-year lease, contingent on one of their daughters vacating a rent-stabilized apartment she occupies in the building. A one-year lease is obviously not practical for a restaurant, and the attempt to include Kenny's daughter in the transaction did not please him. All in all, I would say that Robert A. Cohen was fortunate that the of-

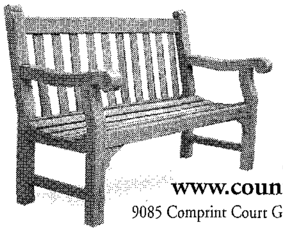


Fine Cluster Earrings
(yellow gold and platinum)
Rubies and diamonds $6,500
Sapphires (2=4.12 cts) and diamonds (2.76 cts) $12,500
European cut diamonds (2=3.30 cts and 18=3.65 cts) $27,500
SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE
Emeralds (2=4.75 cts) and diamonds (6.82 cts) $38,500

FIRESTONE AND PARSON
No.8 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116
(617) 266-1858

Rediscover Europe Step by Step!
OWNER LED WALKING ADVENTURES IN ITALY, SWITZERLAND & FRANCE
Tre Laghi
Luxury Walking Tour Specialists
Call: (800) 293-1117
www.trelaghi.com
1500 SW Fifth, Suite 2506 / Portland, OR 97201

Country Casual. TEAK GARDEN FURNISHINGS



96 page Catalogue
800-284-8325
www.countrycasual.com
9085 Comprint Court Gaithersburg, MD 20877
#119004-02-04

Authentic Indian Food
available at your door step
· All Natural · Ready-to-Eat
Vegetarian, Vegan, Kosher, Meats
TASTYBITE
Log-on today, we have it all!
www.tastybite.com
1-888-827-8900

fers were made when Kenny wasn't holding a handful of flour.

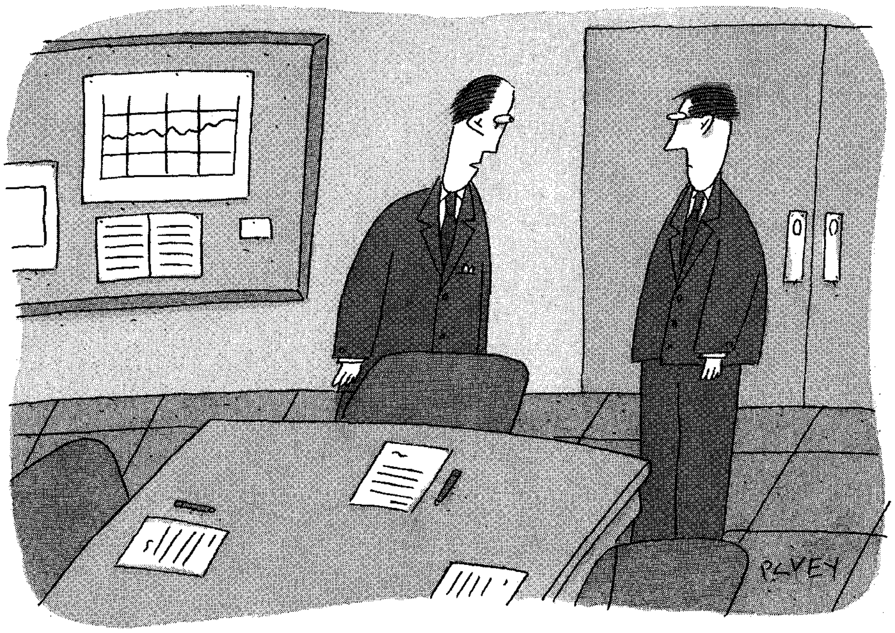
Kenny decided that he would leave at the end of May rather than sign a new lease. He hopes to reopen nearby. He is aware, though, that the tone of his business has a lot to do with the physical space it has occupied for more than thirty years, including what I suppose you'd have to call the décor—the old-fashioned booths that Kenny ran across and cut down to fit his space, the music from tapes he puts together himself from songs of the twenties and thirties (supplanted, occasionally, by a modern Finnish group that concentrates on the tango). Kenny says that what really distinguishes his place from other restaurants is the level of human involvement in every detail. As he has put it, "I've been peeing on every hydrant around here for thirty years." In other words, the Shopsin's my daughters have known—Kenny's, Ken and Eve's, the Bubble Gum Store—can no longer be affected by publicity because it will no longer exist.

The God of New York real estate is an ironic god, and he works in ironic ways. What propelled Ken and Eve into the restaurant business in the first place, twenty years ago, was a bump in their rent. They figured that their choices were to start opening on weekends or transform the store into a restaurant. By that time, Kenny was doing a good business in takeout sandwiches like chicken salad and egg salad. "Zito would bring me over bread and I would just have a line out the door every lunchtime," he recalled not long ago. "Essentially, if anyone asked me what I did for a living, I said I sold mayonnaise—mayonnaise with chicken, mayonnaise with shrimp, mayonnaise with eggs, mayonnaise with potatoes. The key was that essentially you sold mayonnaise for eight dollars a pound and everything else you threw in for free." He had also been making what he calls "restaurant-style food to take out of a non-restaurant"—turkey dinner every Wednesday, for instance, and chicken pot pie. When Ken and Eve closed the store for the summer—because they had young children, Shopsin's was the rare Village business that often observed the *fermeture annuelle*—Ken, a reasonably adept handyman who had worked as a building superintendent before he went into the grocery business, turned Shopsin's General Store into a restaurant. When it opened, the menu listed a conventional number of more or less conventional dishes, although there was some hint of the future in items like Yiddishe Melt (grilled American cheese on rye over grilled Jewish salami) and Linda's Frito Pie, a Texas specialty whose recipe has to begin, "Take a bag of Fritos . . ."

Kenny had Frito Pie on the menu because one of his customers, who's from Texas, was comforted by the knowledge that less than a block from her house in Greenwich Village she could order a dish that most Texans identify with the snack bar at Friday-night high-school football games. The menu grew because of what customers wanted or what Kenny was struck by in reading cookbooks or what new ingredient he happened across or what he figured out how to do as he taught himself to cook. "I don't make too many decisions," Kenny once told me. "I react." Lately, for instance, a lot of dishes have been inspired by the tchotchkes he's bought on eBay. Because of some tortilla bowls he snapped up for a bargain price, he is now offering Mexican moo shu pork, which can also be ordered with chicken or turkey and has something in common with a former dish called Thai Turkey Torpedo. Some large plastic bowls split in two by a curving divider led to what he calls Yin/Yang Soups—a couple of dozen soups and a couple of dozen kinds of rice that can be ordered in any combination, like Sweet Potato Cream Curry Soup with Piña Colada Rice or Toasted Pumpkin Seed Soup with Ricotta Pignoli Rice.

There is almost no danger of a customer's ordering Plantain Pulled Turkey Soup with Strawberry BBQ Rice only to find out that there isn't any more Plantain Pulled Turkey Soup and he might have to settle for, say, Mashed Potato Radish Soup. In the twenty years my family has been eating at Shopsin's, putting our meals on the tab we established when Ken and Eve were selling milk and paper towels and cat food, nobody at our table has ever ordered anything the restaurant was out of. When I asked Eve recently if that held true with other customers, she said that she thinks she remembers running out of chicken cutlets sometime within the past year.

"I think I have everything all the time," Kenny says. "That's part of the system." What does happen occasionally is that Kenny gets an idea for a dish and writes on the specials board—yes, there is a specials board—some-



"I appreciate your contribution to our tremendous drawdown of inventory, but isn't your office getting cramped?"

thing like Indomalekian Sunrise Stew. (Kenny and his oldest son, Charlie, invented the country of Indomalekia along with its culinary traditions.) A couple of weeks later, someone finally orders Indomalekian Sunrise Stew and Kenny can't remember what he had in mind when he thought it up. Fortunately, the customer doesn't know, either, so Kenny just invents it again on the spot.

As the menu at Shopsin's grew, I half expected to come in for lunch one day and find Kenny being peered at intently by a team of researchers from the institution that foodies are referring to when they mention the C.I.A.—the Culinary Institute of America—or maybe even a team from the other C.I.A. The researchers would have their work cut out for them. It's true that if you listen to Kenny talk about cooking for a while, you can see the outline of some general strategies. For instance, he freezes pre-portioned packages of some ingredients that take a long time to cook and then pops them into the microwave—"nuking 'em" for a couple of minutes—while he's doing the dish. He fiddles with his equipment, so that he's drilled out the holes on one burner of his stove and rigged up a sort of grid on another. He runs a new idea or a new ingredient through a large part of his menu. ("I love permutations.") On the other hand, Kenny has said, "There's no unifying philosophy. I do a lot of things special, and not only do I do a lot of things special but I commingle them."

To get an idea of Kenny's methods, I once asked him how he made one of Eve's favorites, Chicken Tortilla Avocado Soup, which he describes as a simple soup. "When someone orders that, I put a pan up with oil in it," he said. "Not olive oil; I use, like, a Wesson oil. And I leave it. I've drilled out the holes in the burner so . . . it's really fucking hot. . . . On the back burner, behind where that pan is, I have that grid. I just take a piece of chicken breast and throw it on. The grid is red hot, flames shooting up, and the chicken sears with black marks immediately and starts to cook. If there were grits or barley or something, I would nuke 'em. . . . At that point in the

Sils
Waldhaus

CH-7514 Sils-Maria
Tel. 0114181-838 51 00
Fax 0114181-838 51 98
www.waldhaus-sils.ch
M. + F. Dietrich/U. Kienberger ★★★★★

Sils
ENGADIN

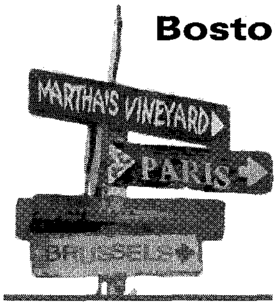
Sils-Maria = 6 miles from bustling St. Moritz: An unspoiled and peaceful alpine village amidst gleaming lakes + impressive mountains. And above it all this remarkable + historic hotel, family owned and managed ever since it opened in 1908

ALPINE CLASSICS
PRIVATE HOTELS

2002 summer season: June 13 to Oct. 20
2002-2003 winter season: Dec. 17 to April 22

Grand, but friendly and relaxed;
children very welcome!
Free pickup at St. Moritz train station.

EXPLORATIONS IN LEARNING



BOSTON UNIVERSITY
METROPOLITAN COLLEGE

Boston University Summer 2002

Venture far beyond the traditional classroom!

- Discover kayaking in Maine
- Take courses in Martha's Vineyard
- Study aboard the Tall Ship *Alabama*
- Explore the historic and future landscapes of Boston
- Study business in Paris or Brussels

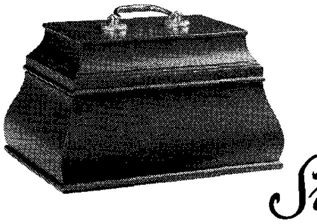
These five- to fourteen-day courses may be taken for college credit.

Call for a brochure today.
617.353.2978 www.bu.edu/explorations
explore@bu.edu

Boston University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action educational institution and employer.

A Perfectly Elegant Gift

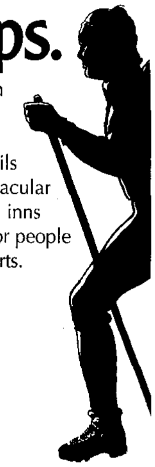
Choose a handcrafted tea caddy for elegant gift giving. Also available as a jewelry box. Crafted in solid cherry, mahogany, or walnut. Call 1.800.252.2131 to order. www.suters.com



Suter's

Showrooms • 2610 S. Main St. • Harrisonburg, VA • 540.434.2131
4200 W. Broad St. • Richmond, VA • 804.358.8497

Hike the Alps.



Author/mountaineer Fred Jacobson leads special hiking trips in the Swiss and Italian Alps–Appenzell, Champoluc, Kandersteg, Meran, Sils Maria, Sulden, and Zermatt. Spectacular scenery. Beautiful trails. Delightful inns and fine cuisine. For active outdoor people who also like their creature comforts. Our 30th summer!

For free information contact:
ALPINE TRAVEL INC.
P.O. Box 159 - NY
White Plains, NY 10605
Tel: (800) 291-8126
Visit us at www.alptrails.com
E-mail: ati@bestweb.net

Deluxe Rail Adventures from New York to
MAINE

acadianrailway.com (866) 91 TRAIN

The Literary
Magazine by Children
A perfect gift to inspire creativity
$33/yr (6 issues) • 800-447-4569
stories • poems • art • ages 8–13
www.stonesoup.com

new balance for men & women

Free Catalog
Over 70 Styles
Hard to Find Sizes - 100% Guaranteed
Active Soles - Dept 1NY6
Plymouth, MA 02360
Call 1-800-881-4322

ITALY
HOLIDAY HOMES
Villas • Cottages • City Flats
By the Week or Month
All Personally Screened
www.vbella.com 415·554·0234
Vacanza Bella

cook, that's what would happen if this were Chicken Tortilla Avocado with barley in it. For this dish—this is a fast dish—I shred cabbage with my knife. Green cabbage. . . . I cut off a chunk and I chop it really finely into long, thin shreds. I do the same with a piece of onion. Same with fresh cilantro. At this point, José has turned the chicken while my back is still to the pan. I throw the shit into the oil, and if you rhythm it properly, by the time you have the onions and everything cut, the oil is just below smoke. Smoke for that oil is about three-eighty-five. After three-eighty-five, you might as well throw it out. It won't fry anymore; it's dead. But I turn around just before smoke and I throw this shit in. And what happens is the cabbage hits it and almost deep-fries—it browns—and now we get a really nice cabbage, Russian-type flavor. The onions soften immediately, and I now turn back and I take one of any number of ingredients, depending on what they've ordered, and in this particular instance, for someone like you, I would add crushed-up marinated jalapeño peppers to about a five, which is about a half a tablespoon. They're in a little cup in front of me. . . . In front of me, in, like, a desk in-out basket, I have two levels of vegetables that don't need to be refrigerated and I have plastic cups full of garlic or whatever. So now the soup is cooking. So then I reach under the refrigerator. On the refrigerator floor there's another thirty or forty ingredients, and I'll take for this particular soup hominy—canned yellow hominy—and throw in a handful of that. Then I go to the steam table and take from the vegetarian black-bean soup—it has a slotted spoon in it—a half spoon of vegetarian cooked black beans. And then I switch to the right, because the spice rack is there, and I put in a little cumin. Then I take the whole thing and I pour chicken stock in it from the steam table. And at this point José has already taken the chicken off the flame. The chicken now is marked on the outside and the outside is white, but it's not cooked. It's pink in the center. He cuts it into strips, we throw it into the soup, a cover goes on the soup, it gets moved over to the left side of the stove on a lower light and in about three minutes José takes a bowl, puts some tortilla chips that I've fried the day before in the bowl with some sliced avocado and then pours the soup over it. And that's Chicken Tortilla Avocado Soup." There are about two hundred other soups.

Presumably, Kenny can arrange his ingredients around a customized stove in some other storefront. Presumably, it will be convenient to our house. The last time I discussed the move with him, he mentioned a couple of possibilities. One is convenient, but it's somewhat larger than the present restaurant and it seems less vulnerable to being shaped by Kenny's personality. Another has the appropriate funkiness but also has what everyone, Kenny included, believes is "the world's worst location." That tempts Kenny, of course. He is someone whose contrariness is so ingrained that he can begin a description of one cooking experiment like this: "At the time I was interested in baba ghanouj, I was reading a James Beard article about eggplants and he said never put eggplants in a microwave. So I went and put an eggplant in a microwave. . . ."

When Kenny mentioned that the second place was on such an awful block that my daughters and I would probably come only once, I assured him of their loyalty, assuming he continued to turn out "tomato soup the way Sarah likes it" and "Abigail's chow fun." They confirmed this when I phoned them to bring them up to date on the latest Shopsin's developments. They also expressed some concern about the possibility that writing about Shopsin's even now carried the risk of causing overcrowding or inadvertently saying something that could lead to the banishment of the author—and, presumably, his progeny.

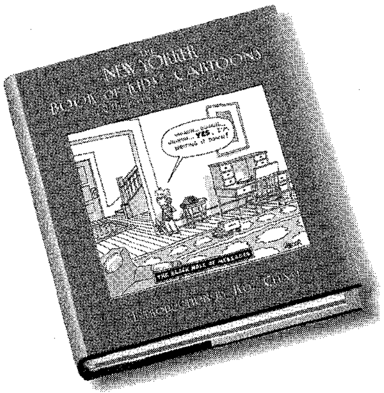
"Don't worry," I told one of them. "Kenny says it's O.K."

"Just be careful," she said. ♦

NEATEST TRICK OF THE WEEK
From the West Newbury (Mass.) News.

Rabies is a frightening and contagious viral disease that affects the brain. The Disease usually spreads from wildlife to domestic pets and sometimes people—through a bite wound. Once it strikes, rabies is always fatal. You can protect your pet simply by fascinating your animal.

Rediscover...



the child within

THE PERFECT GIFT
for anyone
who was ever
a child—
or a parent

Contains 126 classic *New Yorker* cartoons that spotlight our rollicking relationship with children—and theirs with the adult world

With a special illustrated introduction by **Roz Chast**

Bloomberg PRESS

AVAILABLE WHERE BOOKS ARE SOLD,
by calling **1-888-417-9597**, or at
www.bloomberg.com/books

[illegible]

SHOUTS & MURMURS

NIXON ON TAPE: THE QUIZ

BY PAUL SLANSKY

One of the happiest things about life in America is the certainty that, every year or two, a fresh batch of Nixon tapes will be released to the public. In the past few weeks, students of the thirty-seventh President have been busy working their way through four hundred and twenty-six more hours of very special Presidential conversations, bringing the total to 1,779.

1. True or false: President Nixon's immediate response to the news that George Wallace had been shot was to tell his aides to circulate a story that the would-be assassin "was a supporter of McGovern and Kennedy. . . . Say you have it on unmistakable evidence."

2. During an Oval Office discussion, a guest made a statement that prompted Nixon to ask, "You believe that?" "Yes, sir," the man assured him. "Oh boy," Nixon said. "So do I. I can't ever say that, but I believe it." What preceded this exchange?

(a) White House adviser John Ehrlichman called J. Edgar Hoover "a little light in the loafers."

(b) The Reverend Billy Graham said that the Jews had a "stranglehold" on the media which "has got to be broken or the country's going down the drain."

(c) Attorney General John Mitchell suggested that it "might not be a bad idea" to "beat the shit out of" some of the "folks on our enemies list."

(d) Vice-President Spiro Agnew complained that the media had "made too much of a fuss about" the My Lai massacre.

3. Which TV program so offended Nixon that he declared, "I do not think that you glorify on public television homosexuality . . . any more than you glorify, uh, whores."

(a) "All in the Family."

(b) "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In."

(c) "Love, American Style."

(d) "The Odd Couple."

4. Which world leader did Nixon hate so much that he could hardly refer to him without using the words "son of a bitch"?

(a) France's Georges Pompidou.

(b) West Germany's Willy Brandt.

(c) Canada's Pierre Trudeau.

(d) Chile's Salvador Allende.

5. True or false: Nixon suggested that the famous photograph of him standing next to Elvis Presley was a fake.

6. What was Nixon's reaction to a Jack Anderson column revealing that the Ambassador to France, Arthur K. Watson, had got drunk on a plane from Paris and had groped the flight attendants?

(a) "Look, people get drunk."

(b) "People chase girls."

(c) "It's a hell of a lot better for them to get drunk than to take drugs. It's better to chase girls than boys."

(d) All of the above.

7. Complete this quote from Nixon to former Texas Governor John B. Connally: "Look at the Justice Department. It's full of ______."

(a) dead wood

(b) bums

(c) homosexuals and what have you

(d) Jews

8. What city did Nixon say had become so "faggy" that he "can't shake hands with anybody" who comes from there?

(a) San Francisco.

(b) Key West.

(c) New York.

(d) West Hollywood.

9. What was Nixon referring to when he told his national-security adviser, Henry Kissinger, "I don't give a damn. I don't care"?

(a) Hostile political cartoonists.

(b) Rising unemployment.

(c) Civilian casualties in Vietnam.

(d) The student deaths at Kent State.

10. Fill in the blank. When Billy Graham said that he'd been invited to a lunch with a group of *Time* editors, H. R. (Bob) Haldeman told him, "You meet with all their editors, you better take your ______."

(a) tape recorder

(b) own sandwich

(c) Bible

(d) Jewish beanie

11. How did Nixon describe the anti-war movement?

(a) "A gaggle of chronic malcontents who are so far left they can't even see what's right with this country."

(b) "A wild orgasm of anarchists sweeping across the country like a prairie fire."

(c) "A big, fat boil that needs to be lanced, and the more painfully the better."

(d) "A bunch of filthy dope fiends who won't be happy until everyone is fornicating in the streets and so forth."

12. True or false: According to Nixon, marijuana is worse than alcohol because, while people drink "to have fun," they smoke pot "for the purpose of getting high."

13. Complete this quote from Nixon to Bob Haldeman: "You know, it's a funny thing—every one of the bastards that are out for legalizing marijuana is Jewish. What the Christ is the matter with the Jews, Bob? What is the matter with them? I suppose it's because ______."

(a) they're so high-strung

(b) they need something to do at their fancy-schmancy parties

(c) most of them are psychiatrists

(d) reefer goes good with pornography

Answers:

(1) True, (2) b, (3) a, (4) c, (5) False—he said that about the famous photograph of a naked nine-year-old Vietnamese girl running away from a napalm attack, (6) d, (7) d, (8) a, (9) c, (10) d, (11) b, (12) True, (13) c.

PERFECT READING LAMP

LEDGER Floor Lamp

The Double Swivel Action places light correctly for a high or low chair, or a desk, or a table, or a computer.

Bronze with Slate Base
Opal White Shade
Height Adj. 30"- 53"
100 watt std. bulb
Dimmer Switch

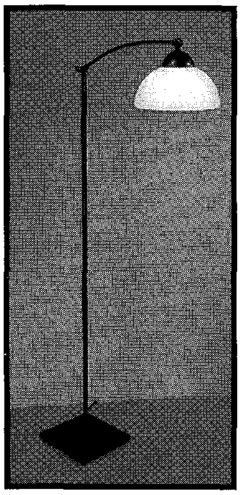
$129.00
2 for $229.00
shipping $12.00 each

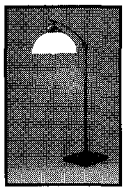
LEDGER Table & Desk Lamp

The Ledger Table & Desk Lamp is now available for Desk, Table & Nightstands. It has all the fine features listed above.
(Height Adj. 12"- 29")

$119.00
2 for $209.00
shipping $10.00 each

Mail or Phone Orders
NEW HAVEN LIGHTING 1-800-243-3123
P.O. BOX 6353 HAMDEN, CT 06517
www.newhavenlighting.com





NERO'S PACKING MAJOR FIREPOWER BETWEEN THE EARS.
NERO WOLFE
New Episodes Begin
Sun. April 14
8pm/7c
A&E
AandE.com/nero

The salt air & sea of the Maine coast are yours . . .
on a private peninsula in Casco Bay
www.rockgardensinn.com 207-389-1339
ROCK GARDENS INN & Cottages

Private Flats • Discount Hotels
PARIS LONDON AUSTRALIA
CONNECTIONS
Management Group
an affiliate of The London Connection
1-888-393-9120 www.ConnectionsMG.com

DEPT. OF EDUCATION

CAN ART BE TAUGHT?

How a dismissal at Harvard threw an entire field into question.

BY CALVIN TOMKINS

In a time when art can be anything at all, how do you teach it? That nagging question causes endless problems at the colleges and universities where most art teaching goes on these days, and it was at the heart of the recent unpleasantness at Harvard that led to the resignation of Ellen Phelan. Phelan, a New York artist, had been hired in 1995 to build up Harvard's studio-arts program, and by most accounts she had been successful. An engaging, unshy fifty-eight-year-old with boundless energy and considerable wit, she had picked up what was by general agreement a moribund program and turned it into something never before seen at Harvard: a full-fledged undergraduate curriculum in the practice of the visual arts, a program that was attracting students and exciting interest at other universities around the country. Phelan's Harvard career came to a sudden end a year ago, however, during a meeting in the office of Jeremy Knowles, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

She had wanted the meeting to find out whether the Dean was going to approve two new faculty appointments that she and her colleagues in the Department of Visual and Environmental Studies (V.E.S.) had requested. Phelan quite often got what she wanted from University Hall, but this time she got something different.

"Jeremy said that the entire administrative staff of our department was ready to quit en masse over what they described as an abusive and obscene working environment," Phelan recalls. "I started to say that I knew there had been problems between certain faculty members and some of the recently appointed staff people, but Jeremy cut me off, saying, 'Oh, it's far worse than that.' He said the staff had complained that we had obscene nicknames for them, which we used behind their backs, and that we made them run personal errands for us, and that we criticized them publicly in awful ways. Obscenity was a word that kept coming up. 'For instance,' he said, 'you were overheard to say, "Those cocksuckers in University Hall." ' He went on and on about that, and about an obscene e-mail that somebody had sent to our academic coördinator. He also talked about lavish dinners I had given for visiting lecturers, and about absenteeism on my part. He said my faculty was out of control, and that I was therefore to resign immediately as chair of the department, and that Marjorie Garber, a professor from the English Department, was being brought in to replace me. I said something like 'Does this mean I'm fired?' and Jeremy said, 'Oh, no, no, no, what a calumny, nothing like that.' He became more conciliatory, holding my hand and saying, 'We must meet again, we must talk.' I ended the meeting. I was in a state of shock." As she was leaving, Phelan learned that her two new faculty appointments had been approved.

The Dean had academic procedure on his side. Chairs of Harvard departments serve, on a rotating basis, at the Dean's pleasure. Phelan, who was not tenured and who often complained about the administrative burdens of being a chair, was still employed, and theoretically, at least, she could keep on teaching, proselytizing, and leading the charge for the studio-arts program at Harvard. To Phelan and many of her colleagues at V.E.S., though, the way she was called to account made it pretty clear that her presence was no longer desired. Angry and humiliated, she refused to resign as chair, whereupon Knowles formally removed her and named Garber in her place. Some people in the department saw it all as a personality clash: the brash, mouthy art dame versus the all-powerful Dean. "The funny thing is I actually thought Jeremy and I were good friends," Phelan said last spring. To others, though, the larger question was whether Dean Knowles wanted to curtail or even to get rid of the studio-arts program. Phelan was committed to teaching art as an ongoing experiment, and to do so by bringing in practicing artists, with all their anarchistic and disorderly attributes. Harvard, like most universities, wants to teach art as an academic discipline. In the absence of any clarifying statements from the Dean's office, no one could explain why the V.E.S. situation had got so lamentably out of control, but the whole spectacle could be viewed as one more chapter in the evolving and sometimes uneasy relationship between art and the academy in America.

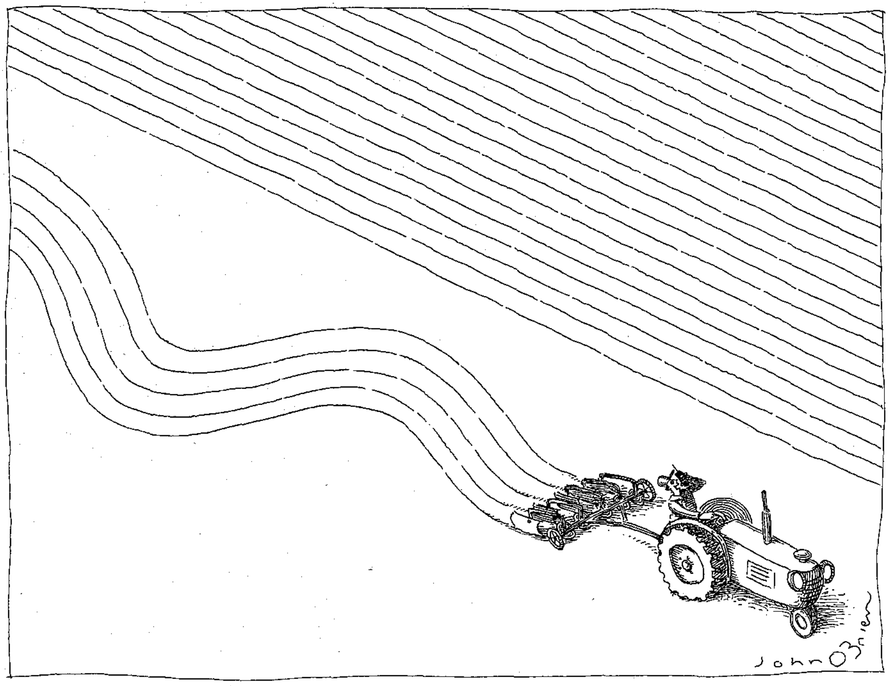
The tremendous expansion of university and college-based art departments which began soon after the Second World War has never, to my knowledge, been adequately explained. The G.I. Bill of 1944, which sent a generation of veterans to college at government expense, was certainly a big factor, but why so many returning G.I.s wanted to study painting and other forms of creative expression is still something of a mystery. In the early forties, there were eleven institutions offering graduate (M.F.A.) degrees in studio art; today there are more than a hundred and eighty. This phenomenal growth has transformed university-level arts education from something offered mainly in teachers colleges, for young women planning to spark the creativity of second and third graders, into a career track for men and women who want to become professional artists, or, failing that, teachers in college art departments. Private, non-college-based art schools have also proliferated since the forties, but nowhere near as impressively as the university and college art departments, several of which emerged in the late nineteen-fifties as primary seedbeds of new artistic talent. Yale's School of Art, which has the distinction of being the country's first (it was started in 1864), turned out so many future art stars in the late fifties and sixties that its students liked to joke about New York being an extension of Yale. The list from those years includes Chuck Close, Eva Hesse, Nancy Graves, Brice Marden, Robert Mangold, Jonathan Borofsky, Jennifer Bartlett, Rackstraw Downes, Janet Fish, Audrey Flack, Howardena Pindell, William Bailey, Neil Welliver, and Richard Serra. The California Institute of the Arts (CalArts—a private academy financed originally by Walt Disney), the Rhode Island School of Design, and the graduate art department at U.C.L.A. were the hot schools of the eighties and nineties, and right now the action seems to be liveliest at Yale (again), U.C.L.A., and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena.

Ellen Phelan was told that her department caused offense. Photograph by Todd Eberle.

At every one of these institutions, a key factor has been the school's ability to hire the best artists it can find to teach there, often on a part-time basis. "My formula for a good art school," U.C.L.A.'s John Baldessari told me, "is you get together these artists who are not teachers but artists first, who are of such diverse opinions that they are just short of fistfights. That attracts good students, and then the students teach themselves." What used to be taught, of course, were the traditional methods of drawing, painting, casting, welding, and carving; the properties of materials; the interaction of colors; camera and darkroom techniques; and a few other practical matters. But this kind of instruction has largely disappeared from the curriculum in a great many college art departments. The virtual takeover of art teaching by the universities in this country has coincided with the dying out of teaching methods passed down from the medieval guilds to the apprenticeship system of the Renaissance and, after, to the nineteenth-century beaux-arts academies in Europe, and this has had a profound effect on the kind of art that gets produced.

"Can there be any doubt that training in the university has contributed to the cool, impersonal wave in the art of the sixties?" the critic Harold Rosenberg observed in 1970. In order to become an academic discipline, art had to be intellectualized. Craft and technique were subordinated to verbal analysis, problem-solving, and critical theory. University-based art teaching, in fact, became more and more like scientific research, with the pursuit of ideas as its primary goal. (This trend is reflected in the title of Harvard's Department of Visual and Environmental Studies, with its careful avoidance of the slippery word "art.") Conceptual art, video art, performance art, installation art, and the other idea-friendly trends that dominate the big international exhibitions these days did not originate in university art departments, but they were certainly welcomed there, and a great many students have had to acquire the requisite post-structuralist jargon that goes with them. It may be that a movement away from intellectualized art is now gaining a foothold at some schools, including Yale. Richard Benson, the current Dean of Yale's School of Art, believes strongly in art students' learning how to make things that reflect the world around them in some concrete way. "The problem," he said to me recently, "is that the subject is no longer the world. The subject is the history of art, and to me that makes it immediately decadent and fundamentally dull. There's a lot of conceptual art around today because it's easy. It's much easier to think about something than to make something. But the absolute fundamental core of art is that you don't know ahead of time what the thing you're making is going to become. To me, you can't have the thing in your mind become clear without giving birth to a physical thing."

At Harvard, the trial-and-error uncertainty of artmaking comes up against an incorrigibly rational, deeply logocentric academic culture. Art studies first entered the Harvard curriculum in 1874, when Charles Eliot Norton was appointed Lecturer on the History of Fine Arts as Connected with Literature. A significant title: the visual sneaks in as a poor relation of the verbal. The art-history department grew and prospered, aided immeasurably by the opening, in 1927, of the Fogg Art Museum, still the finest teaching collection at any American university, and by Paul Sachs's famous museum course in the nineteen-twenties and thirties, which trained dozens of future curators and museum directors. In those days, one or two art-history professors offered their students "practical exercises" in drawing and watercolor, as an aid to understanding what artists actually did with their hands, but any serious training in painting and sculpture was considered irrelevant to the liberal-arts curriculum at Harvard. Architecture was another story. Harvard established a Graduate School of Design in 1935, and imported Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus, from Germany, to run it. Design, under Gropius, meant architecture, urban planning, and landscape designing, and the school quickly became preëminent in those fields.



In 1952, a distinguished committee headed by John Nicholas Brown, for whose ancestors Brown University was named, was asked to study the future of the arts at Harvard. The university's position at the apex of the American educational pyramid lends great authority to its occasional reports on national or educational policy, and the Brown Report, which was published in 1956, would have an incalculable influence on arts education throughout the United States. At Harvard, however, it must have come as something of a shock. Concluding that "the study of fine arts at Harvard College appears restricted, even limited," the report proposed, among other things, that the university build a new Design Center, where "the history of art and the practice of art should be intimately connected." Artists and artmaking were conspicuously absent from the Harvard campus, in the committee's view, because, "highly as the university views the work of art, it tends to take a dim view of the artist as an intellectual." This, the report said, was an absurd attitude. "The artist is a creative intellectual, the great artist great both as artist and as intellectual. The university should welcome him."

One wealthy Harvard alumnus, an Oregon pear grower and businessman named Alfred St. Vrain Carpenter, was so impressed by the Brown Report that he offered to give the university a million and a half dollars to build the recommended Design Center, provided that he could approve the architect. The university accepted, and offered the commission to Le Corbusier, who was pleased by this opportunity to design what was and remains his only building in North America. The Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, whose free-form, interlocking glass-and-concrete elements led students to call it "the copulating pianos," became, in 1968, the home of the newly created undergraduate Department of Visual and Environmental Studies, a title that might seem to reflect studies in optics and ecology. What it really reflects is the Bauhaus design principles that Gropius had instilled at Harvard, and which, for the next twenty-five years, tended to make the Carpenter Center a sort of stepchild of the Graduate School of Design. A few courses in drawing, painting, and sculpture were offered, to be sure, along with courses in architecture and design science and "visual literacy," but students could not work toward a degree in fine arts.

A warming trend for the arts at Harvard set in during the presidency of Derek Bok, and it accelerated under Neil Rudenstine, who succeeded Bok in 1991. In 1993, with Rudenstine's encouragement, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences appointed a special advisory committee, chaired by Professor Lawrence Buell, of the English Department, and including a New York artist (Mel Bochner) and a curator at the Museum of Modern Art (Robert Storr), to take a critical look at the program in Visual and Environmental Studies. The Buell report, issued later that year, recommended major changes. The department, it said, should phase out its courses in design and environmental studies, and concentrate on film and video, which had become quite a strong program, and on studio arts, a program that was admittedly weak. One specific recommendation was that "a professional teacher/administrator—ideally a practitioner as well as an experienced animator of projects in the field" be hired to run the studio-arts program. Another was that "every effort should be made to enlist visiting artists" to teach in it. The Buell report was commissioned and approved by Jeremy Knowles, a former chemistry professor whom Rudenstine had appointed two years earlier as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Knowles took steps to implement its recommendations.

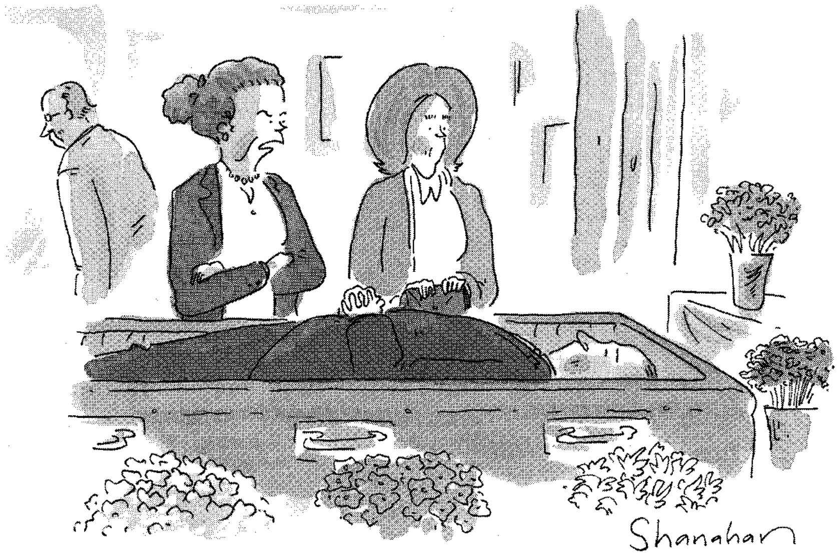
Phasing out the design track at V.E.S. was relatively easy, since several of the faculty members who taught those courses were either retiring or about to retire. Finding the right person to build up studio arts was more difficult. By "practitioner," the Buell committee had obviously meant a professional working artist. Since Harvard expects its faculty to be drawn from the best minds in every field, only an artist of major reputation would seem to fit the bill—Jasper Johns was one suggested candidate—but artists of Johns's eminence do not exactly leap at the chance to teach Harvard undergraduates. James Cuno, the acute and well-connected director of the Fogg Art Museum, pushed for Ellen Phelan, a New York painter with a solid reputation but a relatively low profile. Chris Killip, then the chair of the V.E.S. Department, kept hearing good things about Phelan from other people—that she was a fine painter who knew just about everybody in the New York art world (her husband is the well-known sculptor Joel Shapiro), and that she was also a woman who could get things done. Although Phelan had not taught since 1981, she had a lot of ideas about art education, and, after "fourteen years of silence in the studio," as she put it, the thought of a new challenge appealed to her. She had recently been approached about a job teaching painting in the graduate school at Yale, but Harvard seemed more interesting—it was a chance to do something entirely new, at the undergraduate level, with students who were generally considered to be the nation's best. "I think being an artist is about everything you know," she said to me at the time. "And being broadly educated makes you a more complex human being, so that you bring more to the discipline. Working with that gene pool at Harvard really interests me a lot." She accepted Harvard's offer, and in January of 1995 she went there as a Professor of the Practice of Studio Arts.

Phelan was a bit surprised at first to find that the department lacked funds to buy art materials. Under prodding from Phelan and two other faculty members, Knowles agreed to add a hundred thousand dollars to the V.E.S. budget, and Phelan also started raising money herself. She signed up several New York artists to come and speak at the Carpenter Center, and persuaded friends to pay their lecture fees. Phelan had replaced Killip in 1996-97 as acting chair of the V.E.S. Department, a job that included being director of the Carpenter Center, and she became the full-time chair in 1999. Under her direction, the center's largely dormant lecture and exhibition program came to life. She raised between fifteen thousand and thirty thousand dollars a year to pay for the lecture series she initiated, and she got the owners of the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Boston to donate rooms for visiting speakers—up to twenty a year, many of them art-world stars, like Brice Marden, Terry Winters, Elizabeth Murray, Chuck Close, David Salle, Eric Fischl, Kiki Smith, Claes Oldenburg, and Coosje van Bruggen, as well as Joel Shapiro, who lived in New York and complained that this was the only way he got to see his wife. The Thursday-night lectures, which were free, pulled in students from many other departments at Harvard, and also faculty members and people from Boston.

Phelan's most spectacular coup was to turn seventeen derelict squash courts on Linden Street into studios for students and visiting artist-teachers. The conversion cost $1.6 million; Phelan and James Cuno raised six hundred thousand dollars, and the university put up the rest. It didn't go unnoticed that the biggest studio, comprising two former squash courts, was reserved for Phelan herself. A few people grumbled that too many of the artists she invited to Harvard were personal friends. But many more were impressed by the excitement that she was generating.

There were, to be sure, some problems. The department's financial affairs were usually in turmoil. The listing of studio-art courses for the upcoming academic year kept changing (partly because it was so hard to pin visiting artists down to specific dates), and some listings would be too late to get into the course catalogue. Even before Phelan arrived, moreover, there had been an unusually high turnover rate on the administrative support staff. Phelan, who liked to say that she was "not hired for my middle-management skills," had welcomed the arrival of Susan Foster and two other new administrative assistants in the summer of 2000. Foster was an experienced academic troubleshooter. She had worked successfully with the chairs of other departments at Harvard, and Phelan hoped that she would get things running more smoothly at V.E.S. But there was tension right away between the new staff and some of the faculty, who resented the removal of two well-liked staff veterans to make way for the Foster team.

Foster, for her part, had never seen anything like the administrative chaos at V.E.S., or the faculty behavior that went with it. "I think there was an attitude that faculty are supreme and don't have to listen to anybody else," she told me. "Artists seem to think that's how faculties work, when in fact it's not. Universities are much more collaborative than



"He makes it look so damn easy."

• •

people realize." Foster told Phelan that she had to do something about Chris Killip and Nancy Mitchnick, two V.E.S. teachers whose abrasive manners and rough language were upsetting the staff. Phelan spoke to both offenders; she didn't have the authority, she said, to reprimand or discipline senior faculty, but she did ask Mitchnick to step down as head tutor. Phelan was not teaching a course during the fall semester. For the first time in her six years at Harvard, she spent more time away from the campus—a week in New York, a week in Europe—and this became a factor in the absenteeism charge that Knowles cited. Throughout the fall and winter, relations between faculty and staff grew steadily worse.

Up until the end, Phelan thought that she had a good working relationship with the Dean, and thought that she knew him pretty well. Born in England in 1935 and schooled at Oxford, where he taught until coming to Harvard, in 1974, Jeremy Knowles was a scientist with important discoveries to his credit in the areas where chemistry and biochemistry overlap. He was also witty, incisive, and charming when he chose to be. As the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Knowles became a powerful man at Harvard, with jurisdiction over the faculties of every undergraduate department; he was an efficient and diplomatic administrator who consulted with his colleagues on important issues, but he could also intervene unilaterally in specific cases, and he was implacable about budgets.

In retrospect, Chris Killip believes that Ellen Phelan's downfall began with an incident in 1999, when Phelan, acting on her own initiative, went down to New York one weekend and raised the money to hire four additional part-time teachers. "Ellen actually thought the Dean would be pleased," Killip says, "but that's not how things work here." Others say that it was Phelan's indiscretion that did her in. Frustrated by the constant struggle to fund her program, she had talked openly of leaving to take a job at Yale. Worse, she had talked about going to dinner at the home of President Rudenstine and his wife, whom she knew before any of them went to Harvard. (Angelica Rudenstine is a highly regarded art historian.) Neil Rudenstine told me recently that he "thought the world" of Ellen Phelan, and that he strongly supported her program. There is little doubt that his retirement last year weakened her position, but even before that, according to some observers, there had been a cooling in the once warm friendship between Rudenstine and Knowles, whose commitment to studio art as an academic discipline was not as clear as Rudenstine's.

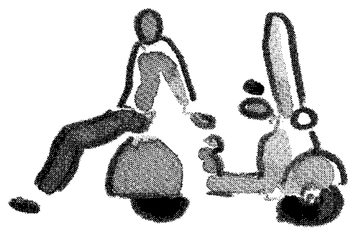
Dean Knowles agreed to talk with me on the condition that I not ask about the events involving Phelan and V.E.S. A slim, self-contained man in a sober gray suit, he could not have been more cordial. A Harvard friend had described Knowles to me as being "right out of Gilbert and Sullivan," and he did have some noticeably theatrical mannerisms—eyebrows arching, hands and arms in frequent motion, a battery of nods and droll facial expressions to accent his verbal points. "At Harvard, you know, we have six orchestras," he said, consulting one of several documents he was holding. "Twenty-five years ago, there were two. We have seventeen dance groups, and thirteen a-cappella singing groups. There are more than five hundred concerts a year at Harvard College, given by undergraduates." When I suggested that a good argument could perhaps be made for keeping these and similar activities, including studio arts, outside the formal curriculum of a liberal-arts college, Knowles replied that this question had been discussed many times, in the faculty room across the hall. "It's a very interesting question," he said. "Where is the edge of the curriculum? If I step back and say what I'm concerned about, I'm concerned about the whole experience of undergraduates in this college. So, where the line is drawn between the curricular and the noncurricular is in a sense less important than that there be opportunity all the way from the most theoretical and bookish activity to practice. From thinking about to doing. What you're asking is where do you draw this line. I am moving my hands because in different institutions the line is in different places."

I asked whether there were likely to be changes made in the V.E.S. program under the new chair, Marjorie Garber, and the Dean told me gently that I was treading on forbidden territory, or "sinning," as he put it. He also explained that a departmental chair was a rotating position that had to do not with authority but with leadership. And the program? "We want to educate the truly and deeply talented artists," he said, "and also to open the eyes, to improve the visual literacy, of the economists and physicists—people who come to college with no particular bent or interest or background in the arts. . . . But we mustn't pretend to be an art school, just as we don't pretend to be a drama school or a conservatory."

Marjorie Garber, the new chair of the Department of Visual and Environmental Studies and director of the Carpenter Center, is a Shakespeare scholar with many books to her credit, including one on dogs ("Dog Love") and one called "Sex and Real Estate: Why We Love Houses." She has been and still is on a large number of academic committees at Harvard, and is known to be an excellent administrator. I asked her whether she considered her appointment to the V.E.S. Department an interim one, as some insiders have speculated, and she replied emphatically that she did not: "When Dean Knowles appointed me, he made it clear that he wished me to serve as chair, not as a caretaker or a fill-in." She also said that the V.E.S. Department "is committed to maintaining and strengthening the . . . studio-arts program," that she intended "to locate and hire the best possible artists and teachers for the program," and that, "as I know you know, we have the complete support of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences."

Jeremy Knowles, who had let it be known last summer that he intended to continue as Dean for "more than a year but less than a decade," unexpectedly announced in February that he was stepping down, to return to teaching. A successor has not yet been named. The future of the V.E.S. Department, where Marjorie Garber remains firmly in place as chair, is much debated both inside and outside the university.

"Ellen Phelan did absolutely everything that was mandated by the Buell commission," according to Robert Storr, the MOMA curator who served on the Buell committee and on an outside committee that reviews the work of the V.E.S. Department. "And you cannot do that job unless you are as ambitious, as determined, and as knowledgeable and connected as Ellen." Signs of a shift away from studio arts have been read into the fact that the V.E.S. Department offered more courses in design last fall, and hired two new faculty members to teach film theory. Phelan had urged the visiting lecturers and artist-teachers whom she had engaged for 2001-02 to honor their commitments, and most of them did so, but a lot of people are waiting to see who signs up to teach there next fall. "I hope for the best," says Alfred Guzzetti, a senior professor in the V.E.S. film program, "and fear the worst."



Phelan sold her Cambridge house last spring and withdrew to her studio in Westport, New York, on Lake Champlain, where she and Joel Shapiro spend their summers. "Suddenly the paintings are going very well," she reported in late summer. "I've done a couple of things that I think are amazing." (Her new work is on view at the Senior & Shopmaker Gallery, in New York, until April 13th.) She worked in her garden, played golf, and drove around in the new Jaguar that Joel had given her after the Harvard debacle. On September 7th, she formally resigned from Harvard. I asked her about the "obscene" remark that had so offended Jeremy Knowles, and she sighed. "There was a faculty meeting," she said, "and toward the end of it Susan Foster said we had to vote on the new faculty appointments, and I said, 'Well, we can't do that until we know whether we're getting them.' What I said was 'until we hear something from those'—and I put my head down on the table and pounded my hands—'those cocksuckers in University Hall.' And everybody laughed. O.K., I'm a bad girl. What can I say?"

Phelan is proud of what she accomplished at Harvard. "You know," she said, "I remember reading about the Brown Report when I was twelve, and being struck even then by the thought that the practice of art should be seen as equivalent to the intellectual disciplines. I still agree with that. Actually, I see art as a long conversation, which has been going on for five hundred years or more. It's not a competition. Each artist brings what he or she can to it. And what occurred to me after the Harvard thing was that I was trying to give students a sense, at some point, that they can be part of this conversation." ♦

ChefsChoice®
Cordless Electric Teakettle

Model 685

Revolutionary Cordless Design! Heating element is never in contact with water, so there's no build-up of objectionable mineral deposits on it.

Elegant Design for Kitchen and Serving Area: Teakettle lifts from corded base for easy filling and pouring.

For the retailer nearest you, call:
EdgeCraft
(800) 342-3255
(610) 268-0500

© EdgeCraft 1999, Avondale, PA 19311 www.edgecraft.com

ARCHIE'S A DAPPER PRIVATE EYE... WITH AN EYE FOR THE LADIES.
NERO WOLFE
New Episodes Begin
Sun. April 14
8pm/7c
A&E
AandE.com/nero

How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Just cross the Street!
New York's best location offers residential comfort with hotel style: business and fitness centers, spacious kitchen-equipped suites, concierge – all just steps from the world's greatest music, art, theater and shopping.
BUCKINGHAM HOTEL
101 West 57th St. at 6th Avenue NYC 10019 (888) 511-1900 BuckinghamHotel.com

Italy Beckons You to Stay & Visit®
Small Group Tours
Call for Free Catalog
800 411 3728 The Italy Experts
visit us at www.stayandvisit.com

PROFILES

ASHCROFT'S ASCENT

How far will the Attorney General go?

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

There had never been a congressional hearing quite like the one that was held before the Senate Judiciary Committee last December 6th. In the weeks leading up to it, Attorney General John Ashcroft had overseen a series of increasingly controversial steps as part of the domestic war on terrorism—including the detention of more than a thousand people on secret charges, the establishment of a new system for monitoring certain attorney-client conversations, and, most notably, a plan to create military tribunals for alleged war criminals. Reflecting the concerns of a broad array of political observers, some of the Democrats on the committee—including the chairman, Patrick Leahy, of Vermont, Edward M. Kennedy, of Massachusetts, Dianne Feinstein, of California, Charles Schumer, of New York, and Russell Feingold, of Wisconsin—had cautioned that the measures infringed on civil liberties. The hearing was their chance to raise the issue with the Attorney General.

When the senators filed in, Ashcroft was already in his seat. ("My father was never on time—he was always *early!*" Ashcroft wrote in a brief memoir he published in 1998, "Lessons from a Father to His Son.") Ashcroft projects solidity; at fifty-nine, he is fit, with the broad shoulders of the high-school football player he used to be. His expression was fixed and impassive. The hearing had a special resonance because less than a year earlier the Attorney General had himself served as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, during his one term as a Republican senator from Missouri. Then, in January of 2001, after President Bush nominated him as Attorney General, Ashcroft had testified in his own contentious confirmation hearing—and won committee approval by a margin of ten to eight. (Fifty-eight senators later voted for Ashcroft, but the forty-two negative votes were the most ever cast against the confirmation of an Attorney General.) Ashcroft had been deeply offended by that vote, so when he began his prepared remarks it was noticeable that he omitted the customary fulsome praise for committee members. "On the morning of September 11th, as the United States came under attack, I was in an airplane with several members of the Justice Department en route to Milwaukee, in the skies over the Great Lakes," he said. "From that moment, at the command of the President of the United States, I began to mobilize the resources of the Department of Justice toward one single overarching and overriding objective: to save innocent lives from further acts of terrorism."

There was a consistent theme in Ashcroft's explanations of his actions. Over the previous three months, the options before him had been binary—action or inaction, speed or delay, engagement or surrender. "Since those first terrible hours of September the eleventh, America has faced a choice that is as stark as the images that linger of that morning," he said. "One option is to call September 11th a fluke, to believe it could never happen again, and to live in a dream world that requires us to do nothing differently. The other option is to fight back, to summon all our strength and all of our resources, and devote ourselves to better ways to identify, disrupt, and dismantle terrorist networks."

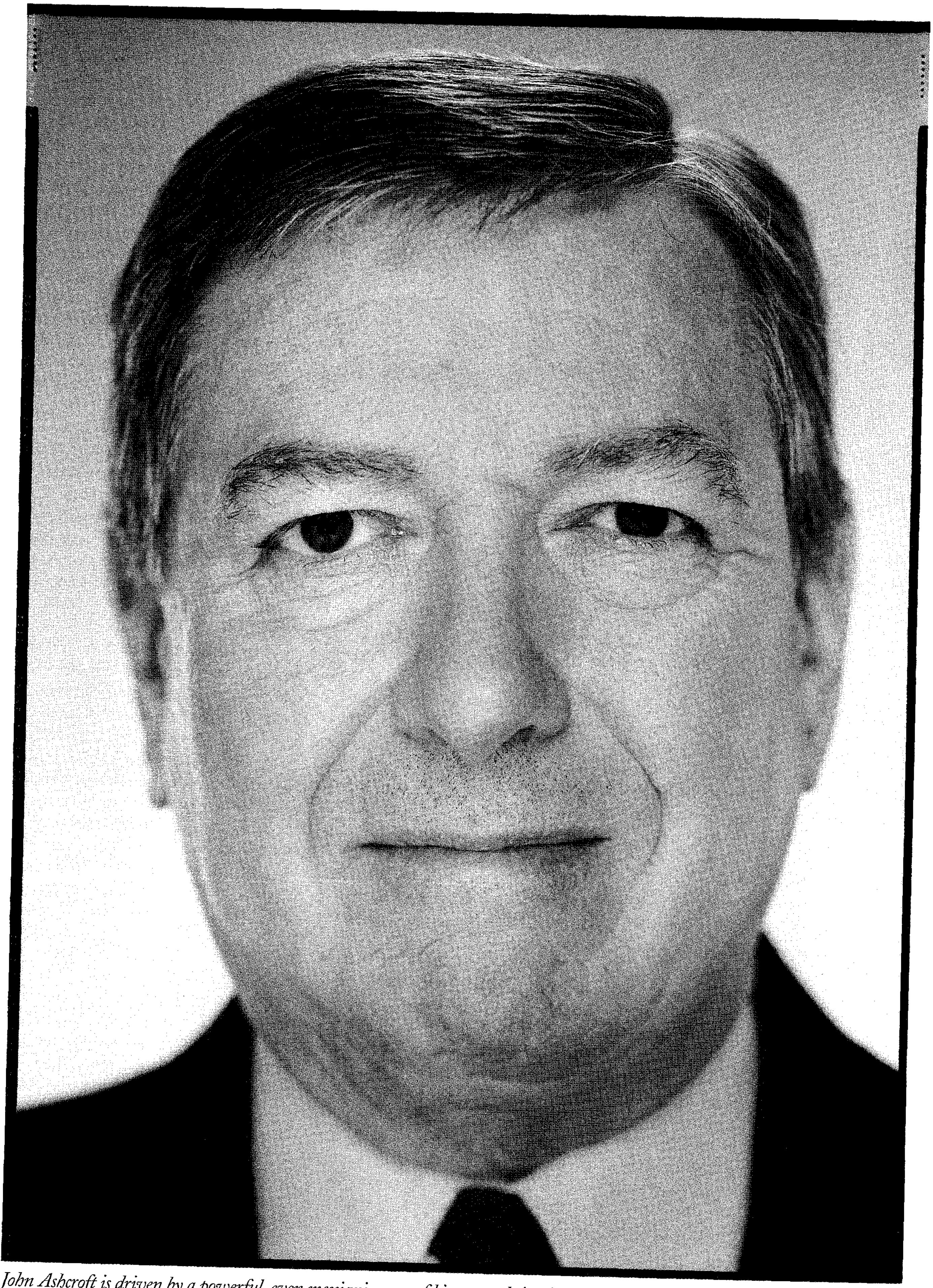
Ashcroft had a simple directive for his critics. "We need honest, reasoned debate, and not fear-mongering," he said. "To those who pit Americans against immigrants and citizens against noncitizens, to those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty, my message is this: your tactics only aid terrorists, for they erode our national unity and diminish our resolve. They give ammunition to America's enemies, and pause to America's friends. They encourage people of good will to remain silent in the face of evil."

After a dramatic pause, an aide handed Ashcroft a plastic bag of the type used to protect courtroom evidence; it contained a book bound in red leather. "This is a seized Al Qaeda training manual—a how-to guide for terrorists that instructs enemy operatives in the art of killing in a free society," he said, as news photographers scrambled in front of him. "In this manual, Al Qaeda terrorists are now told how to use America's freedom as a weapon against us."

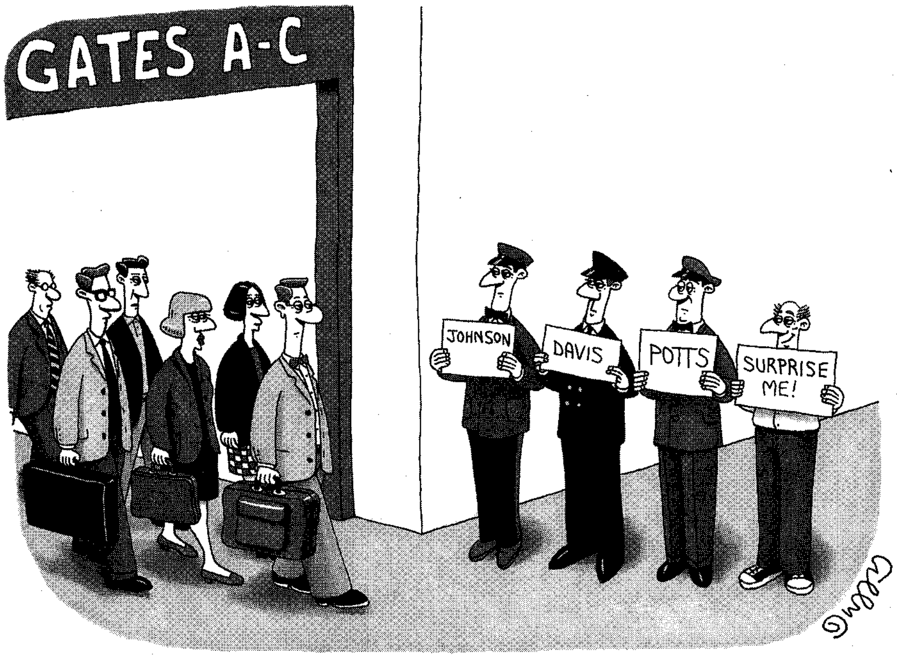
By the time the Democrats had the chance to ask questions, they looked almost physically diminished by Ashcroft's performance. In a most direct way, the Attorney General had said that his critics were helping America's enemy; any questions the senators might have about his proposals had been preëmptively labelled unpatriotic, even subversive. And in response to this charge Leahy, Kennedy, Feinstein, and Schumer said nothing, although they did broach some tentative doubts about military tribunals and a few other initiatives. Finally, about ninety minutes into the hearing, Senator Feingold said, "I would just like your assurance that you do not consider . . . the hearing today . . . somehow aiding the terrorists by eroding national unity." No, Ashcroft replied, the hearing was going just fine.

The magnitude of the events of September 11th would have focussed attention on whoever happened to be Attorney General, but John Ashcroft has seized his moment with a special intensity. He currently enjoys wide support—a seventy-six-per-cent approval rating, according to the most recent Gallup poll. He is held in similarly high regard at the White House. "The A.G.'s job is one that really entails managing controversy, and he has managed it very well," one adviser to President Bush told

CORBIS SABA



John Ashcroft is driven by a powerful, even messianic sense of his own role in American politics. Photograph by Martin Schoeller.



me. "If you are a Cabinet secretary in one of the big jobs, the best you can do is not having the White House thinking about you every day. Ashcroft is more than doing a good job. He is a star." In a political era of poll-driven caution, Ashcroft has also been an anomaly. As a two-term state attorney general, a two-term governor, a senator, and now Attorney General of the United States, he has rarely shied from taking clear stands on issues. He is the most socially conservative figure to become Attorney General in many years—far more so than, say, Edwin Meese III, who was President Reagan's Attorney General—and, not surprisingly, he has become the most polarizing figure in the Bush Cabinet. Senator Leahy believes that Ashcroft is using his popularity from the anti-terrorism campaign to push his agenda on social issues, particularly abortion and gun control. "In many ways, Ashcroft has created a far more political department than any Justice Department since I've been here," Leahy told me. "I think it's beneath the dignity of the Justice Department." Ashcroft's allies, on the other hand, see the Attorney General's work as an effort to restore the reputation of his department after what they regard as the politically compromised reign of Janet Reno. Orrin Hatch, the senior Republican on the Judiciary Committee, told me, "Ashcroft's people have a lot more professional approach toward the work of the Justice Department."

"He's like Bobby Kennedy," David Israelite, Ashcroft's counsellor and deputy chief of staff, said. "He came here to move the bureaucracy. It wasn't an easy path for Kennedy to decide that the department was going to take on organized crime, and it won't be easy for Ashcroft to do everything he wants to do. But he came here to change things." In fact, Ashcroft has become such a formidable figure because his passionate advocacy has been matched by his accomplishments. In less than a year, he has begun to achieve his vision for the Justice Department. Ralph Reed, the Republican political consultant who is the former executive director of the Christian Coalition, told me, "The thing that is interesting about John is that he has had this remarkable, almost unique career, in which he has had a strong political base within the conservative wing of the Party, and at the same time he has achieved success as a mainstream political figure. He is not an insurgent. A lot of people don't understand that about him. He is not charging the breastworks. He is an extremely accomplished public servant."

This duality—outsider and insider, advocate and operator, insurgent against the established order and defender of the status quo—has been the leitmotiv of Ashcroft's life and career. His appointment as Attorney General gives him a chance to harness these conflicting roles in a way that may leave a significant legacy, reflecting his place at the far right of the American mainstream. In this he is driven by a powerful, even messianic sense of his own role in American politics. The fact that his current eminence so quickly followed what might have been a career-ending setback—his defeat for reëlection to the Senate by a candidate who, on election day, had been dead for three weeks—can only have enhanced his view of himself as a man of destiny, one whose Cabinet post may be only the latest step in a continuing ascent.

A few weeks after Ashcroft testified before the Judiciary Committee, I visited him in his office at the Justice Department. To reach the Attorney General, I walked through two receptionists' offices, a conference room with seating for about fifty, a room for another secretary, and into his office, which is surprisingly small. The room is decorated with Early American furniture, the walls are painted tan and white, and just one photograph hangs on the wall in front of Ashcroft's desk: it is of Barbara Olson, who died on the flight that crashed into the Pentagon on September 11th. "It reminds me," Ashcroft said when I asked him about it. He paused, then added, referring to Olson's husband, Theodore B. Olson, the Solicitor General, "He was sitting right here in his office in the United States Department of Justice. She called him twice from the plane." Ashcroft shook his head. "We had been out to their house for dinner on the Saturday night before."

For Ashcroft, Barbara Olson was more than a friend and the wife of a colleague. She was also an outspoken conservative, an ideological kindred spirit, and an important supporter. In the photograph, she is speaking at a rally during his confirmation hearings where a sign behind her reads "Confirm Ashcroft!"

Over the Christmas holidays, Ashcroft had visited his farm, which is situated on a hundred and fifty-five acres outside his home town of Springfield, Missouri, and he appeared rested. Ashcroft has a different demeanor in private—expansive, often funny, self-deprecating. As usual, he was wearing a white shirt, which, his father taught him, is "the mark of a civilized man," but he slipped his loafers on and off as he talked, and his hair—an immobile helmet in public—fell down over his forehead. I asked Ashcroft about a central element of his anti-terrorism strategy—a shift in emphasis from investigating completed crimes to preventing future crimes. Ashcroft and others have said that this shift will change the way the federal government investigates crime, not just at the Department of Justice but also at the F.B.I. and other law-enforcement agencies.

"If you wait to remediate a crime like the World Trade Center, you have thousands and thousands of people who are dead," he told me. "There isn't any remediation for it. The absence of remediation is compounded when the perpetrators of the crime purposely extinguish themselves in the commission of the crime." This is true enough, but it does not explain how the American legal system, which is based on punishing people for crimes they have committed, would prevent future crimes from happening.

Ashcroft said that the first thing to do was to "change the infrastructure of America." He added, "We're developing more secure procedures at airports, around power plants, our critical infrastructures." There was also, he said, a need to change attitudes. Over the past few months, before the government started the color-coded alert system, Ashcroft had given several general warnings about the possibility of terrorist attacks. These announcements had drawn criticism for their vagueness, but Ashcroft viewed such messages as an essential part of his strategy. "You develop in the culture an alertness, hopefully, to the commission of crimes, so that when people see them being committed they can be participants in stopping them. People ask, 'What do you mean by a heightened sense of alertness? What do you mean by being vigilant?' These folks on Flight 63 out of Paris answered that question." Ashcroft was referring to the passengers on the American Airlines flight, last December 22nd, who subdued a fellow-passenger, Richard Reid, when he apparently tried to ignite a bomb in his shoe.

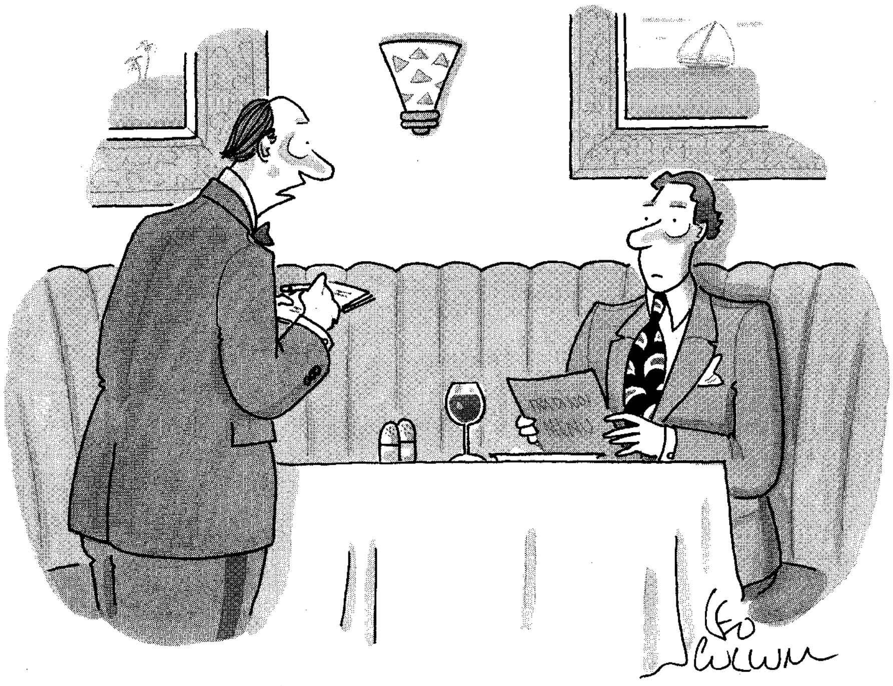
Finally, Ashcroft said, "You want any population that might be thinking about committing a crime to be unsettled and distressed about it. So you have an elevated profile of enforcement. There is going to be an awareness in the community that we are going to ask people to do that in such a way as to elevate a sense among those who would break the law that this isn't the thing to do."

Ashcroft approaches issues in broad generalizations—more in the manner of a politician than a lawyer. For example, in discussing the enforcement-to-prevention shift, he never mentioned what senior Justice Department officials call the central aspects of this policy. Previously, even with organized-crime figures or suspected spies, agents waited to make arrests until suspects committed their crimes. Now officials say they will hold suspected terrorists on even minor charges in an effort to keep them off the streets. In addition, these officials say, they will investigate the immigration status of any people suspected of having terrorist ties and may immediately deport them for minor violations.

Indeed, before the attacks, Ashcroft never showed any special interest in the subject of counter-terrorism. As the *Times* first reported, on September 10th of last year, he sent a final budget request for the fiscal year 2003 to the Office of Management and Budget which called for spending increases in sixty-eight programs, none of which were related directly to terrorism. Earlier in the year, Ashcroft had circulated to department heads a list of seven priorities, among them reducing gun violence and combatting racial discrimination. It said nothing about counter-terrorism.

That changed on September 11th. "What you have to understand about Ashcroft," one of his senior advisers told me, "is that President Bush told him right after the attacks, 'John, you just have to make sure that this doesn't happen again.' He talks about that all the time. Preventing another attack is the priority in the department. That's what he's here to do. He never claimed to be an expert on anti-terrorism, but he tells us to come to him with ideas. If he buys them, he figures out how to sell them to Congress and to the public."

Ashcroft has never been known for his mastery of administrative or legislative detail. It's the big themes that interest him, and he organizes his days and chooses his staff in line with his longstanding priorities. According to aides, the Attorney General rarely reads newspapers or magazines and glances at television news only occasionally. Nor does he read many of the legal documents produced by his department. Rather, he relies almost totally on oral briefings by



"The little sad faces next to some items mean they don't taste very good."

his immediate staff, a group that bears little similarity to the people who surround most Attorneys General. His chief of staff is David Ayres, who spent six years as his Senate chief of staff; David Israelite, the deputy chief, came to the Justice Department after three years as the political director of the Republican National Committee. During Ashcroft's first year in office, his chief spokeswoman was Mindy Tucker, who was previously the press secretary of the Bush-Cheney campaign. Tucker recently left for a job at the R.N.C., and she was replaced by Barbara Comstock, who had been a top aide in Representative Dan Burton's many investigations of the Clinton White House. It is an intensely political operation, without a career Justice Department employee in the inner circle.

Every new Attorney General brings in his own team, but the scorn that Ashcroft's aides feel for "the bureaucracy"—the career attorneys and employees—has helped to create a tense environment within the Justice building. Oddly, what brought these feelings to the surface was something minor—the decision to erect curtains around two twelve-and-a-half-foot-tall Art Deco statues, called the Spirit of Justice and the Majesty of Law, in the building's second-floor Great Hall, where the Attorney General sometimes presides over ceremonies. The official explanation for the change—that it was done "for TV aesthetics" and had nothing to do with the fact that one of the Spirit of Justice's breasts is exposed—seemed implausible to longtime staffers. Since October, most of Ashcroft's television appearances have taken place in a new seventh-floor conference center, rather than in the Great Hall. In any event, a series of hostile e-mails worked their way around the building ridiculing the change as a symbol of Ashcroft's prudishness and intolerance.

The tension with the career employees has made no discernible impact on Ashcroft; he has always had a way of cutting through opposition and complexity, as he reminded me in a lighthearted way. "There are only two things necessary in life—WD-40 and duct tape," he said. "This is just to prove that the universe is binary. WD-40 for things that don't move that should, and duct tape for things that do move but shouldn't." Ashcroft used his analogy to spin out a riff. "Only two things are important about where you go to school—who the students are and who the teachers are. If you've got good students and teachers, you could go in a quonset hut, it doesn't matter. There are only two things important about practicing law—who you're practicing with and who you're practicing against. If you have one of those scumbags, you're in trouble. Now, frankly, I can't control very much who we're practicing against, but we've been fortunate enough to gather some really topflight talent here." At one level, Ashcroft was joking, but he has always been serious about the binary nature of the universe, which for him is defined by right and wrong, good and evil, heaven and hell.

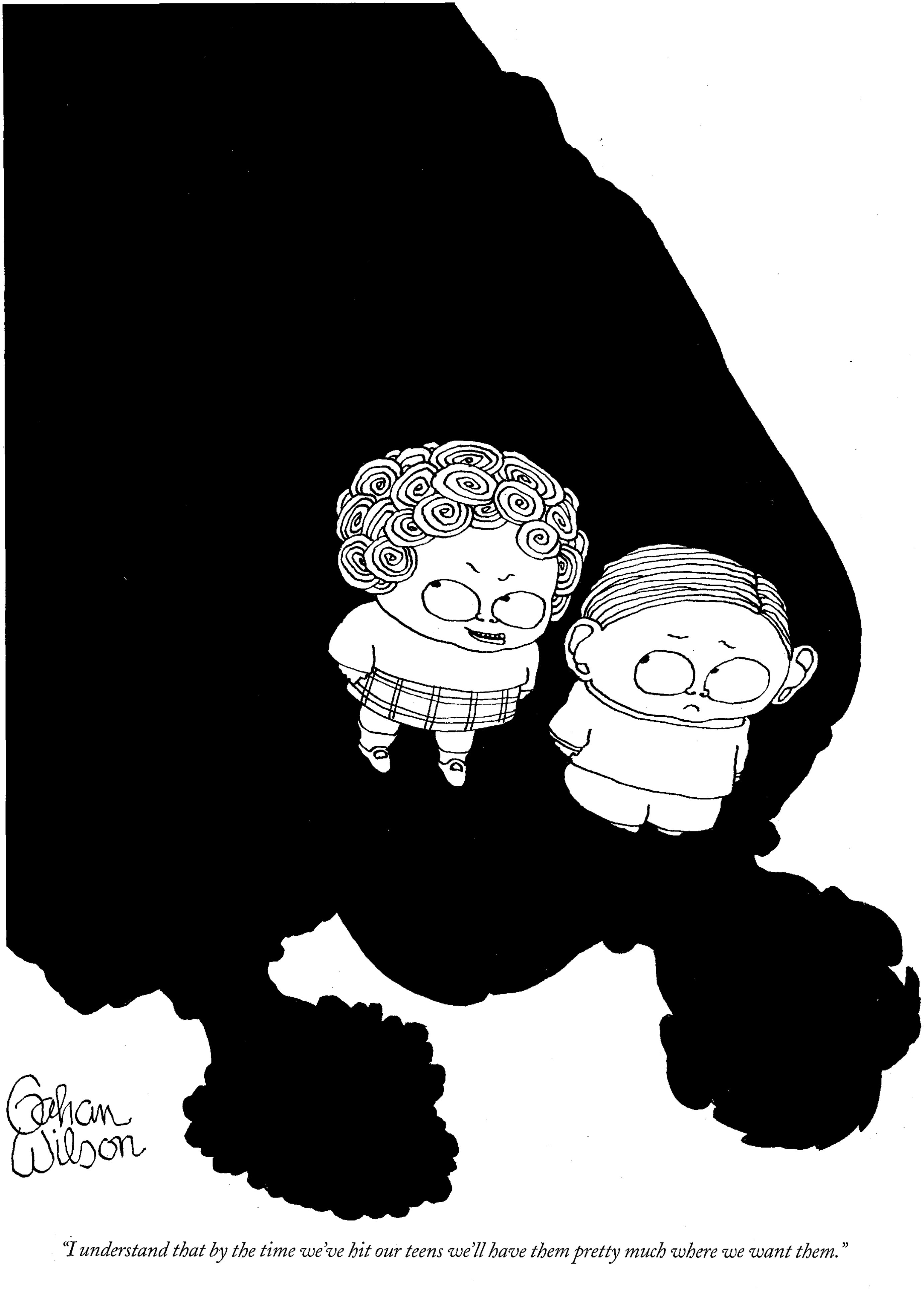
In the early part of the twentieth century, the Attorney General's paternal grandfather, John Ashcroft, emigrated from Northern Ireland. During his first winter in this country, he was helping a neighbor thaw her frozen pipes when a gasoline explosion burned him so badly that he was not expected to live. "But as a result of this burn over his body he dedicated his life to the Lord and to full-time Christian service," J. Robert Ashcroft, the Attorney General's father, recalled in an oral history from 1988. John Ashcroft became an evangelist, travelling throughout the country in a 1921 Chevrolet with oilcloth signs tacked to the sides that read, "Where will you spend eternity?" After several years of this life, he joined a relatively new religious order in the Pentecostal movement, the Assemblies of God.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, the Assemblies of God was among the fastest-growing denominations in America; it reached millions of people, through the television ministries of Jimmy Swaggart and Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. It also achieved unwanted fame: Swaggart and the Bakkers were defrocked by the Church. But at the time that the future Attorney General came of age the Assemblies of God was still on its way toward becoming a mainstream denomination.

The first generation of Pentecostals had kept a distance from secular institutions, especially universities and the military, but Robert, who had followed his father into the ministry, applied to be a chaplain to serve in the Second World War. He was rejected because he had no formal degree, and he took the rejection as a prod to advance his education. He earned a bachelor's degree from New Haven State Teachers College and later received a master's degree in education at New York University. During one of his first ministries, he and his wife, Grace, lived in Chicago, where their son John was born on May 9, 1942.

The Ashcroft family settled in Springfield, Missouri, the town in the Ozarks where the Assemblies of God made its headquarters. "It was the essence of small-town Midwest America," said Grant Wacker, an associate professor of church history at Duke Divinity School, who grew up in the same neighborhood as the Ashcrofts and went to their church. "Most of the town was Southern Baptist, but there was also a significant presence of Pentecostals. You had the sense of being a minority, but you also had a sense of legitimacy, too." Robert Ashcroft led the burgeoning movement for higher education in the Assemblies of God, serving as president of three small Church-affiliated colleges. "Robert was different," Edith Blumhofer, a professor at Wheaton College, in Illinois, and a longtime student of the Church, said. "The Church in general had a love-hate relationship with universities, but Robert believed in those schools. He went to a secular university, sent his children to secular schools. He believed in getting the Assemblies of God schools accredited."

Robert Ashcroft always began his day with prayer. His son wrote, "For him, spiritual preparation was paramount—you begin your day seeking your heavenly Father's presence and blessing." The prayer always included the words "Keep us from accident, injury, and illness. But most of all keep us from evil." John Ashcroft has maintained the practice of morning prayer his whole life, and after becoming Attorney General he began holding morning devotional sessions in his office; the meetings were nominally nondenominational, but they attracted some controversy. The issue is now moot. Ashcroft told me he had to stop the practice, because on most mornings he now goes to the White



"I understand that by the time we've hit our teens we'll have them pretty much where we want them."

House to give President Bush a status report on terrorism.

But Ashcroft, like his father, also belonged in the mainstream secular world. He was a football and basketball star in a public high school, and when he was recruited to play football at Yale his father advised him to take the chance.

“When I attended Yale, I was the only kid there from the Assemblies of God. I was a rare duck,” Ashcroft told an interviewer from a Church publication in 1988. But Ashcroft discovered that “if you lowered your head and ran over somebody on the football field . . . it earned you a kind of respect. People were willing to accommodate your eccentricities without prejudice.” A knee injury prevented him from playing intercollegiate football, but he excelled in intramural sports.

After graduating from Yale with honors, in 1964, Ashcroft won a scholarship to the University of Chicago Law School. There he met a fellow-student named Janet Roede, whom he married in 1967; they moved to his home town to open a law practice. Ashcroft also started teaching at Southwest Missouri State University. (Together, John and Janet Ashcroft wrote a pair of college-level textbooks about law. During her husband’s time in the Senate, she taught law at the business school of Howard University, the historically black school in Washington. The Ashcrofts have three children: a daughter, who is a homemaker; a son, who teaches at a community college in Missouri; and another son, who is in the Navy.)

In the late sixties, Ashcroft knew of only one Assemblies of God member who had run for political office—a Springfield city councilman—and in the 1988 interview he recalled, “It seemed to me we sort of ‘shunned’ government—almost as a worldly thing—in the same way that we shunned formal education for a long time.” But Ashcroft had worked as a summer intern for his local congressman while he was an undergraduate, and he got an appetite for politics. When the congressman announced that he wasn’t seeking reëlection in 1972, Ashcroft decided to run in the primary.

He lost, but even though he had had a tiny budget and his opponent was part of the local Republican establishment, he polled almost forty-five per cent of the primary vote. Shortly afterward, the state’s newly elected governor, Kit Bond, asked him to fill his unexpired term as state auditor. Ashcroft, who was then thirty years old, knew so little about Missouri government that he didn’t realize that the auditor was the fourth-highest-ranking official in the state, but he gladly accepted the assignment and moved with his family to Jefferson City. Two years later, however, in the post-Watergate Democratic landslides of 1974, the voters turned him out.

There followed a brief interlude in Ashcroft’s career which displayed his talents as both an insider and an outsider. The state’s attorney general, John Danforth, hired him and put him to work in an office that he shared with three other junior lawyers—including a recent Yale Law School graduate named Clarence Thomas. There were thirty or so lawyers working for Danforth, and many of them were young, unencumbered, and determined, like most of their peers, to enjoy the life of the mid-seventies. “Clarence doesn’t drink anymore, but he did then, and I introduced him to cigars,” Mike Boicourt, who was also a lawyer on Danforth’s staff, told me. “We used to go out all the time after work, and we went to football and basketball games, to St. Louis to see the Cardinals play.” Ashcroft, however, remained largely removed from the after-work socializing, although he did sometimes join his colleagues on the basketball court, where he displayed characteristic intensity. “I remember once when John was guarding Clarence,” Richard Wieler, a colleague of both men, recalled. “And Clarence finally said, ‘John, I’m not going to drive to the basket. I just want to shoot, fall back, and look pretty. I don’t want to get my ribs killed when I go inside on you.’ ” Thomas also used to tease Ashcroft about his ambition, and he had a point. Danforth had decided to run for the United States Senate, and Ashcroft set out to replace him as attorney general. In addition to doing his day job in Jefferson City, Ashcroft started campaigning in every free moment. “Clarence liked to needle him about it,” Wieler said. “He’d ask John, ‘Do you have time to do this revenue work, or are you working with your constituents?’ ” The hard work paid off in 1976, when Danforth took the Senate seat, and Ashcroft, at the age of thirty-four, won his first election.

Turning losses into victories became a theme in Ashcroft’s political career. “I believe that in every one of these settings there was the potential for greater opportunity,” he told me. “When I lost the race for Congress, I became state auditor. When I lost the race for state auditor, I became attorney general. When I lost the race for national committee chairman”—after his second term as governor—“I became a United States sena-

“I’ve detected an intruder.”

TIBURON

How sweet to lie just once like a painter,
propped at the top of that hill on my elbow,
considering the conundrum of breath.

Grasses blow among my limbs
as if wisdom had been withdrawn
for safekeeping into the library of fragments.

I have no purpose except to return
back down towards a eucalyptus I love.
Its petals are filled with the terrible weight

of careless reversal, grief without consequence.
It burns with such ease.
Just to stand there below it, dreaming of union,

all trembling and scent and colors of the moment,
is like living inside a flower
while making a study of winter.

Blue span that leads to a gleaming city,
you cannot be crossed by longing.

—*Matthew Zapruder*

tor. When I lost the race for senator, I became the Attorney General." He laughed at the improbability, then added, "You know, my brother says I'm the luckiest person in the world. He says, 'If you fell into a sewer, you'd come out eating a ham sandwich.' "

Ashcroft has used a different metaphor in describing the distinctive trajectory of his career in interviews with Christian and conservative publications, and in his memoir, which was published by a leading religious publisher, Thomas Nelson. In 1999, he told *Charisma & Christian Life*, "My theory about elections is mirrored in what I hold about all of life. For every crucifixion, a resurrection is waiting to follow." Ashcroft put the point most directly in an interview with a Springfield publication. "Even though I lost the Congressional race, that campaign put me on the track to governorship. I believe that out of crucifixions come resurrections. A crucifixion is not only a reality but also symbolic of the destruction of everything that seems good and innocent. But I really believe in Romans 8:28: 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' " In 1980, Ashcroft won reëlection as attorney general by a wide margin, and four years later he ran for, and won, the governorship of Missouri.

As a governor, burdened with the sometimes dreary obligations of running a state, Ashcroft had little chance to shine on the issues that meant the most to him and to his supporters. His starchy demeanor perplexed even his admirers. He banned alcohol from the governor's residence, and though he is an accomplished baritone—during the late nineties he was one of the Singing Senators, with Trent Lott, Jim Jeffords, and Larry Craig—he wouldn't dance at his own inauguration. "He was speaking at one of my conferences in St. Louis, and we had a little raffle for a Rush Limbaugh book," Phyllis Schlafly, the longtime head of the Eagle Forum, told me. "But he is so opposed to gambling that when one of the cute little girls I had selling tickets asked him to buy one, he looked like we had done something obscene. He went ahead with his speech, but he just didn't look happy. That's a little too scrupulous for me."

In those years, however, Ashcroft became something of a national figure, owing to his prominence in the abortion debate. Missouri has long been a central battleground in that struggle, and Ashcroft has consistently played a lead role in it. As state attorney general, he made his only appearance before the United States Supreme Court, arguing a set of 1979 Missouri statutes, one of which required all second-trimester abortions to be performed in a hospital. (In that case, known as Planned Parenthood of Kansas City v. Ashcroft, the court struck down the provision by a vote of six to three.) After the Supreme Court upheld Missouri's restrictive abortion law in 1989, then Governor Ashcroft tried to appoint a task force to tighten the law even further. (The effort collapsed after legislative leaders declined to participate and it was revealed that the man Ashcroft had named to lead the task force had been accused of domestic violence.) In 1990, he proposed limiting the ability of women to obtain second abortions, an idea rejected even by the pro-life majorities in the state legislature. At times, Ashcroft would pause during speeches and display his pregnant daughter's sonogram. In his confirmation hearings last year, Ashcroft asserted that victims of rape and incest should have the right to an abortion; some of his earlier statements recognized no such exception. As Ashcroft once said, "If I had the opportunity to pass but a single law, I would fully recognize the constitutional right to life of every unborn child."

With the governorship, Ashcroft became the third member of a triumvirate that dominated Republican politics in Missouri for a generation. John Danforth, an ordained Episcopal priest, served three terms in the Senate; Kit Bond served two terms as governor and joined Danforth in the Senate in 1986. Danforth had a reputation as a moderate voice on national issues; Bond, a back-slapping traditional pol, has concentrated on protecting Missouri's local interests. Not surprisingly, their relationship was difficult at times. "Ashcroft always felt he was getting leftovers," a political consultant familiar with all three men said. "He was the third and least prominent. He was viewed as the third wheel. He felt he was not treated with respect." When I asked Danforth about his former colleague, he said, "I think he's very smart and very able and hardworking and reliable. I don't have any doubt that he's more conservative than I am." Bond told me that he regarded Ashcroft as his "closest political ally," although he, too, thought that the Attorney General was to his right on most matters.

Barred by term limits from continuing as governor after 1992, Ashcroft searched for a new role. The following year, he ran for chairman of the Republican National Committee, but a group of pro-choice Missouri Republicans campaigned against him, and he dropped out of the race. Then, unexpectedly, Danforth announced that he would not run for reëlection in 1994, and Ashcroft easily won the Senate seat in a big Republican year. Once more, his career was reborn.

The morning before Ashcroft was sworn in as a senator, a group of his family and friends gathered at a house near the Capitol. His father, then eighty-three years old, was in declining health, but managed to make the trip to Washington. (Ashcroft's mother had died in 1986.) In his book, Ashcroft wrote, "The ancient kings of Israel, David and Saul, were anointed as they undertook their administrative duties, as were some leaders in the early church. My denomination frequently follows this practice. Accordingly, I was anointed prior to each of my terms as governor." On that morning, Ashcroft said to his friends, "It's too bad we don't have any oil." Then one of them rummaged in the kitchen and found some Crisco. "The oil itself isn't important," his father explained, "except as a symbol of the spirit of God." The group gathered around Ashcroft to pray. His father struggled to get off the couch, and Ashcroft said he could stay where he was. "'John,' my father answered, 'I'm not struggling to stand, I'm struggling to kneel.'" That night, Robert Ashcroft died.

"When Ashcroft got elected to the Senate, something really happened to him," said Paul Weyrich, the veteran New Right figure who is president of the Free Congress Foundation. "He did a lot of things that we were very happy about." From the start, Ashcroft made sure that he wouldn't be seen as just another conservative, even going so far as to enrage an old ally in order to prove that he wouldn't support pork-barrel spending. "I worked like the devil to get him elected to the Senate," Kit Bond told me, "and then the first thing he did with these other Republican hammerheads who had just been elected was to try to rescind the money for the Kansas City courthouse." Free of the minutia of state government, Ashcroft could devote himself to the issues that meant most to him, which, in his Senate years, included trying to dissolve the National Endowment for the Arts for subsidizing what he believed were élitist and indecent projects, denouncing "activist judges," and fighting the nomination of David Satcher as Surgeon General because of his support of abortion rights. Ashcroft's voting record ranked among the most conservative in the Senate, earning him ratings of a hundred per cent from the American Conservative Union and zero from groups like Americans for Democratic Action. However, he showed relatively little interest in the legislative business of the Senate; his chief accomplishment in six years was a provision of the Clinton welfare-reform bill which expanded the use of faith-based organizations.

After Clinton's reëlection, Ashcroft had a single focus—running for President himself. As Bob Jones IV, whose great-grandfather founded Bob Jones University, put it in an article in *World*, a leading conservative Christian publication, "It's only 1997 and already Sen. John Ashcroft is making his move to become the candidate of the Christian right." That year, Ashcroft established a political-action committee, called Spirit of America, to finance an exploratory Presidential effort, which included visits to fifty-six cities in twenty-seven states. On the campaign trail, his message was straightforward. "There are voices in the Republican Party today who preach pragmatism, who champion conciliation, who counsel compromise," he said in one speech. "If ever there was a time to unfurl the banner of unabashed conservatism, it is now."

Ashcroft's courtship of the right during this period led him into some of the more extreme corners of contemporary American politics. In a 1998 interview with *Southern Partisan*, a notorious defender of the Confederacy, he said, "Your magazine also helps set the record straight. You've got a heritage of doing that, of defending Southern patriots like Lee, Jackson and Davis. Traditionalists must do more. I've got to do more." In South Carolina in 1999, Ashcroft accepted an honorary degree and gave the commencement address at Bob Jones University. In his speech, Ashcroft said, "Unique among the nations, America recognized the source of our character as being godly and eternal, not being civic and temporal. . . . We have no King but Jesus." (During his confirmation hearings, Ashcroft said he "probably should do more due diligence" on *Southern Partisan* and claimed that he did not endorse the racist and anti-Catholic views of Bob Jones University, merely that he enjoyed speaking to a wide variety of groups.)

As 1998 began, there were several positive signs for Ashcroft's still unformed campaign. After the Monica Lewinsky scandal broke, he drew wide attention for being the first senator to call on President Clinton to resign, "if these allegations are true." Then the religious broadcaster Pat Robertson and his wife contributed ten thousand dollars to the Spirit of America, and, on June 12th, Ashcroft was endorsed by five leading cultural conservatives: Weyrich; Donald Wildmon, of the American Family Association; Tim LaHaye, the novelist and founder of Family Life Seminars; Michael Farris, of the Home School Legal Defense Association; and Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice. "He is going to stick by his principles, and the principles are rooted in Scripture," Wildmon told me. "A lot of people don't like that. But John doesn't force his Christian values on anybody, and he is not going to deny his faith in order to be accommodating to anyone, either."

Ultimately, the Republican field was too crowded and Ashcroft too unknown. With George W. Bush occupying the center right, and Steve Forbes, Gary Bauer, and Alan Keyes jockeying for the far right, there was no room for Ashcroft to establish a candidacy. So, in

January of 1999, he withdrew from the Presidential race and decided to run for reëlection in Missouri.

Another major figure in Missouri politics over the previous two decades was a Democrat, Mel Carnahan, who had won governor's races in 1992 and 1996. In 1998, he decided to challenge Ashcroft for the Senate seat, and their race was a modern epic—a pair of two-term governors, ideological polar opposites, with a noted personal loathing for one another, slugging it out for almost two full years. The race even had a compelling supporting player—Pope John Paul II, who had persuaded Carnahan to commute the death sentence of Darrell J. Mease, a convicted murderer of a young paraplegic man. Sensing an opportunity, Ashcroft denounced Carnahan as being soft on crime, and set off on a "victims' rights tour" of the state. Soon enough, Ashcroft had the Governor on the defensive; with crime now a major issue, Ashcroft turned his attention to Ronnie White, whom President Clinton had nominated to the federal bench in Missouri. Earlier, Carnahan had appointed White the first African-American member of the Missouri Supreme Court.

Clinton had nominated White to the bench in 1997, and at first the choice drew little notice. But in October of 1999, in the well of the Senate, Ashcroft denounced White as "pro-criminal, an activist, with a slant toward criminals and defendants, against prosecutors and the culture in terms of maintaining order." Ashcroft's Republican colleagues deferred to his view and voted the nomination down by a straight party-line vote of fifty-four to forty-five—the first rejection of a federal judge by the full Senate since Robert Bork was voted down for the Supreme Court, in 1987.

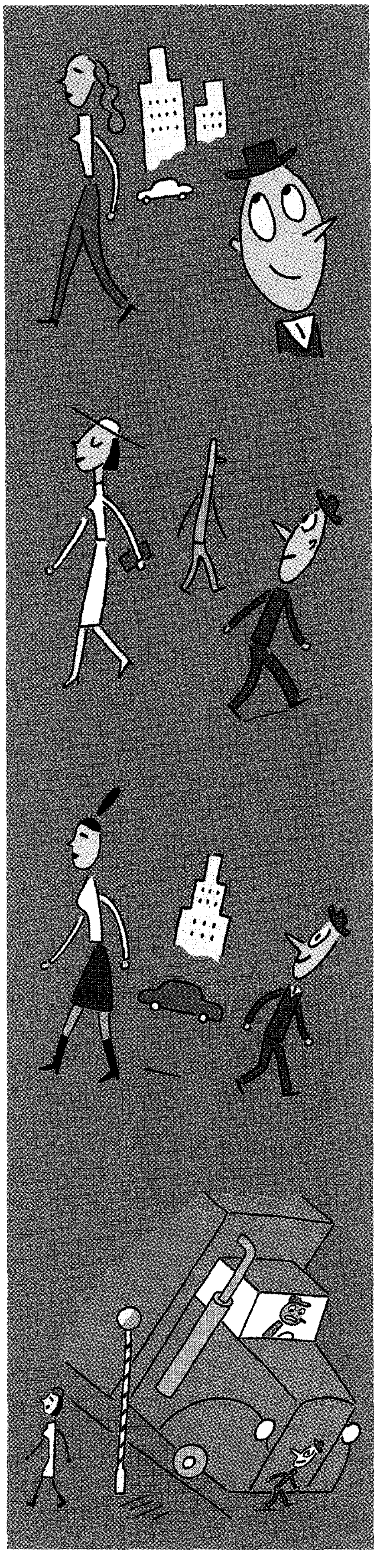
White's record, though, had been distinctly moderate on criminal matters; on the Missouri Supreme Court, he had voted with the majority ninety per cent of the time in capital cases. Ashcroft found himself under attack in editorial pages across Missouri, and even in his home town. To this day, bitter feelings about the matter linger in the Senate. "I thought what happened to Ronnie White was totally unfair," Senator Dick Durbin, an Illinois Democrat, told me. "That was a political calculation by Mr. Ashcroft and his Senate campaign. It had to do with the color of his skin, and that troubled me." At his confirmation hearing, Ashcroft denied any racial motive. Rather, he said, "I simply came to the overwhelming conclusion that Judge White should not be given lifetime tenure as a U.S. district-court judge." One of Ashcroft's first acts at the Justice Department was to nominate Larry D. Thompson, a prominent black attorney from Atlanta, as Deputy Attorney General.

The controversy over White further inflamed Ashcroft's contest with Carnahan, who had a slight lead in the polls. Then, on October 16th, Carnahan's twin-engine Cessna, which was piloted by his son, Randy, disappeared from the radar. Mel Carnahan, his son, and his aide Chris Sifford were all killed in the crash. The following week, Ashcroft tentatively resumed campaigning, saying on Wednesday, October 25th, "I don't know who my opponent is, or if I have an opponent." On October 30th, Jean Carnahan, Mel's widow, announced that she would accept the appointment if her late husband won, and eight days later Ashcroft lost the race by almost fifty thousand votes. Some Republicans pressed Ashcroft to challenge Carnahan's election on legal grounds, but he demurred immediately. "I hope the outcome of this election is a matter of comfort to Mrs. Carnahan," Ashcroft said on the day after the election. "Missouri is a compassionate state, and I think, in a very special way, they have demonstrated their compassion."

When I spoke with the Attorney General, I asked him about the bizarre conclusion to this election. "People said, 'You were very unlucky,'" he said, "and I corrected them. I said, no, I wasn't. My opponent was unlucky. My opponent died in a plane crash in which his life ended together with his son's." He added, "Obviously, I was looking for something else to do."

During his confirmation hearing, Ashcroft embraced the secular scripture of the nation, the Constitution. "As Americans, we live under a Constitution, uniting us under a rule of law," he said. "It is indeed adherence to the rule of law that is the basis of our de-

SPRING FEVER
BY PHILIPPE PETIT-ROULET



Victoria Roberts

"You never buy anything I want."

• •

mocracy." But Ashcroft's view of the world has never been defined by the Constitution, which he has long regarded as a notably imperfect charter. During his six years in the Senate, Ashcroft sponsored seven constitutional amendments, which would ban abortions, prohibit flag burning, permit a line-item veto, require a balanced budget, necessitate a super-majority for tax increases, establish term limits for federal officeholders—and, finally, make it easier to amend the Constitution.

At the hearing, Ashcroft answered a series of questions from Senator Dianne Feinstein about gun control. As a senator, Ashcroft, who is a life member of the National Rifle Association, had opposed virtually all gun-control legislation, including the ban on the sale of assault weapons. (In the 2000 Senate race, the N.R.A. spent three hundred and thirty-nine thousand dollars on Ashcroft's behalf in Missouri.) So it was noticed when Ashcroft reassured Feinstein that he would enforce existing laws, even if he disagreed with them. "I don't believe the Second Amendment to be one that forbids any regulation of guns," he testified.

Four months later, however, Attorney General Ashcroft wrote a letter to be read to forty-five thousand attendees at the National Rifle Association's annual convention, which was held in Kansas City last May. "Let me state unequivocally my view that the text and the original intent of the Second Amendment clearly protect the right of individuals to keep and bear firearms," Ashcroft wrote to James Jay Baker, the N.R.A.'s chief lobbyist. For more than a quarter century, through Republican and Democratic Administrations, the Justice Department had held the opposite view. As a senior official in the Nixon Administration wrote on this issue in 1973, "The language of the Second Amendment, when it was first presented to the Congress, makes it quite clear that it was the right of the States to maintain a militia that was being preserved, not the rights of an individual to own a gun." Charles Fried, the Solicitor General under President Reagan, wrote in a brief in 1986 that "the Second Amendment guarantees no right to keep and bear a firearm that does not have 'some reasonable relationship to . . . a well-regulated militia.'" Likewise, four years later, Kenneth Starr, who was the first President Bush's Solicitor General, wrote that "possession of [a] firearm did not fall within the rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment."

Ashcroft's letter did not precisely contradict his representation to Senator Feinstein—it left room for some regulation of firearms. But it did go a long way toward an endorsement of a constitutional right to bear arms. It was the manner of Ashcroft's action, as much as the substance, that offended old-timers at the Justice Department. "We had filed serious pleadings on this issue, and there were decades of consistent positions from many Attorneys General," one Clinton Administration official in the Justice Department said. "So he just announces to the N.R.A. that the Second Amendment means something else?"

But Ashcroft did not become Attorney General to please the bureaucrats at Justice. He couldn't outlaw abortion or gun control with a stroke of his pen, but he could take important, practical steps toward his long-term goals. In that vein, on February 4th Ashcroft's Justice Department asked a federal appeals court to uphold an Ohio law banning "partial birth" abortion. Two years earlier, the United States Supreme Court had struck down as unconstitutional a partial-birth abortion ban in Nebraska, but the Justice brief argued that the Ohio law could still stand. It was a risky move, which might not succeed, but Ashcroft seems determined to push his department—and the country—where he wants it to go.

Before September 11th, Ashcroft had little direct experience with the criminal-justice system. (The Missouri attorney general does not do much actual law enforcement.) Now, of course, he does. Nadine Strossen, the president of the American Civil Liberties Union, said, "I'm not operating under any illusion that it would have been different under someone else. Every President in times of national crisis has used it as an excuse to crack down on civil liberties." Actually, on the major issues there has been relatively little difference between Democrats and Republicans, but Ashcroft started picking fights virtually from the beginning.

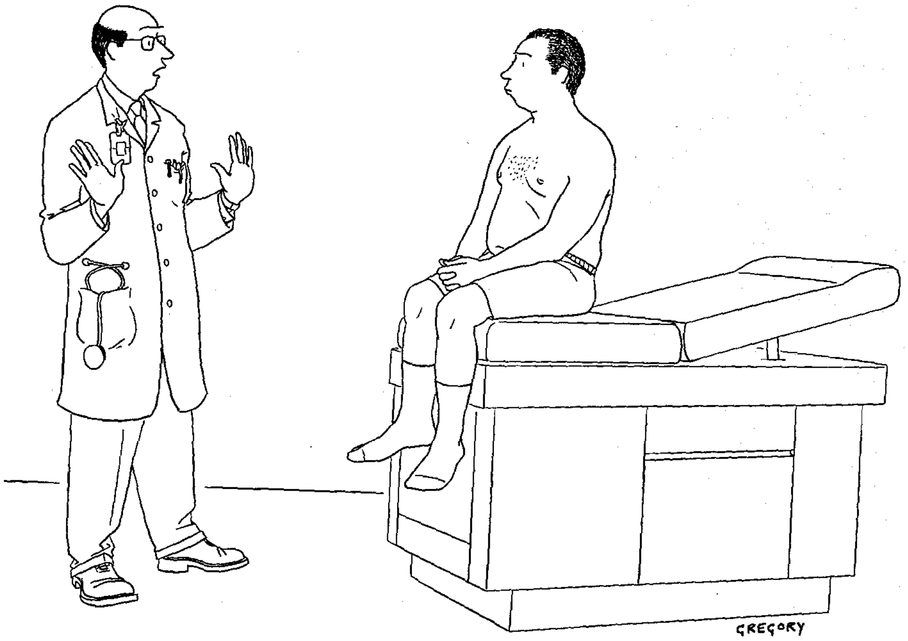
In the first few days after the attacks, Ashcroft was working nearly around the clock in the F.B.I.'s Strategic Information Operations Center, across the street from Justice Department headquarters, supervising the investigation. But he soon turned his attention to the policy implications. At a press conference on September 17th, Ashcroft demanded that by the end of the week Congress pass the U.S.A. Patriot Act, a complex piece of legislation that had not yet even been formally introduced. Ashcroft's demand was a stunning act of bravado: he implied that anyone who wanted to do anything different, or even on a different schedule, was jeopardizing the security of the United States. He threw his putative opponents on the defensive, and the House and Senate passed the legislation in less than a month, very fast by congressional standards. An unlikely coalition of liberal Democrats in the Senate and libertarian Republicans in the House succeeded in stripping the bill of its most controversial provision, which would have allowed the government to detain aliens for unlimited periods on unspecified charges, but the Administration received almost everything else it wanted, in particular, an expanded wiretap authority. In the end, only one senator, Wisconsin's Russell Feingold, voted against the bill.

In recent months, debate over the civil-liberties aspects of the anti-terrorism policy has become somewhat muted. "What concerns me most is that the new law is so broad and indiscriminate," Ronald Dworkin, a professor of law at New York University, said. "It gives them a discretion to charge people with crimes that I think they shouldn't have." But even critics like Dworkin recognize that the Administration has not yet used its new authority in untoward ways. "The motive seems to be to draw it as widely as we can and then decide down the road how broadly we are going to use it," he said. "They're saying, 'Trust us,' but the time to worry about it is not later but now."

It has been Ashcroft's combative posture, as much as the substance of his proposals, that has raised the emotional temperature on his initiatives. For example, on October 31st, the Administration issued new regulations to permit wiretapping of certain attorney-client conversations involving incarcerated terrorism suspects. The new rules affected only a handful of prisoners—currently between twelve and sixteen—and they were to be warned in advance that their communications with their lawyers were being monitored. The Al Qaeda training manual that Ashcroft brandished before the Judiciary Committee underlined the justification for such a move; the manual stated that operatives should "take advantage of visits to communicate with brothers outside prison and exchange information that may be helpful to them in their work outside prison."

The same was true for the Administration's plans for military tribunals, which were introduced by an Executive Order on November 13th. In the initial plans for these proceedings, which came out of the White House rather than the Justice Department, there did seem to be excesses—like the chance that death sentences might be imposed on less-than-unanimous jury verdicts and in the absence of any appeals process. But the official plans for the tribunals, which the Defense Department released on March 21st, moderated these potential excesses, and mollified many critics. "The use of military tribunals isn't necessarily unconstitutional," Laurence H. Tribe, a Harvard Law School professor, said. "The proposal isn't perfect, but it is a lot better than it was." Likewise, the detention of a thousand or so people in the initial dragnet after September 11th has produced few stories of true government abuses. Most of this initial group has been released.

In at least one area, the Justice Department appears to have shown undue leniency. On the morning of Ashcroft's testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee on December 6th, the *Times* reported that the Justice Department had refused to allow the F.B.I. to check its records to determine whether any of the people detained in the terrorism investigation had purchased guns. These so-called "audit logs" of gun purchases were required by the Brady bill, which was signed into law by President Clinton in 1993. Under Janet Reno, the F.B.I. preserved these records for ninety days, so that they could be used in investigations. Indeed, on September 16th, according to the *Times*, the F.B.I. checked a list of a hundred and eighty-six detainees against the registry of gun purchasers and came up with two "hits"—that is, approvals to buy guns. (A separate investigation showed that thirty-four guns seized in crimes had at some point been bought by one or more detainees.) But the next day Ashcroft's Justice Department, in accord with a long-standing demand by the National Rifle Association, ordered that the records be held for only twenty-four hours and then destroyed. According to



"Whoa—way too much information."

the Justice Department's new view of the Brady law, such use of the audit logs was impermissible. In other words, Ashcroft said that the F.B.I. was legally required to take evidence of possible weapons purchases by terrorist suspects—and discard it.

Quizzing Ashcroft about this interpretation of the law at the hearing, Senator Durbin pointed to an excerpt from another Al Qaeda manual: "In countries like the United States, it's perfectly legal for members of the public to own certain types of firearms. If you live in such a country, obtain an assault rifle legally, preferably an AK-47 or variations. Learn how to use it properly, and go and practice in the areas allowed for such training." Durbin then asked, "Why is it, when it gets to the Second Amendment, when it gets to this question of purchasing firearms, particularly by illegal immigrants that are here in the United States, who have connections with terrorism, that there's such a blind eye from the Department of Justice?"

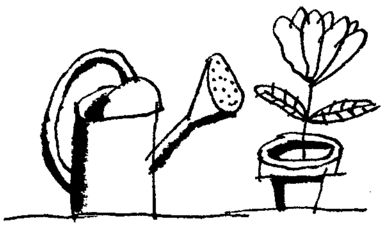
Ashcroft conceded nothing. He said that he believed that the Brady law forbade investigative use of the gun-purchase records, and he was committed to upholding the law. "I don't want to hear two messages from this committee—not both in the same day, or not on a variety of different days—not that you want me to enforce some laws and not other laws, and you want me to ignore laws, or respect some rights and not other rights," he said. Asked by Senator Schumer why he didn't use the U.S.A. Patriot Act to allow for examination of the gun records—why he didn't defy the N.R.A.—Ashcroft dismissed the inquiry, saying, "If you send me the legislation I'll review it, and if you pass the legislation I'll enforce it." Later, Ashcroft stuck to his interpretation of the law, saying, "We believe that the utilization of purchase records for purposes other than the auditing of the system is prohibited by the Brady law." Even a war on terrorism couldn't change the ideology that sustained Ashcroft through three decades of political life.

In late February, Ashcroft faced another Senate panel—the appropriations subcommittee, which controls the Justice Department's budget—but by then the tension between the Attorney General and the Senate had eased. As usual, Ashcroft was early, and he used the time to work the room—shaking hands with sound technicians and spectators. Before the senators arrived, a committee staff member came forward to warn him that the questions might range over many topics. "They can ask me anything they want," Ashcroft whispered in response.

Ernest Hollings, the South Carolina Democrat who chaired the subcommittee, set the tone at the outset. "I thank you, General Ashcroft, for the outstanding work you've been doing on this counter-terrorism," he said, "and I think the committee will want to help you continue to do it." For two and half hours, the senators treated Ashcroft with even greater deference than he had received from the Judiciary Committee. At one point, Hollings did criticize Ashcroft for the Administration's failure to appoint a special prosecutor in the Enron case. But Ashcroft has recused himself from any connection to the investigation, because he had received about fifty thousand dollars in contributions from Enron and its executives for his 2000 campaign.

In fact, since the beginning of the year, Ashcroft has glided from one success to the next. It is Ashcroft—not Tom Ridge, the homeland-security director, or even the F.B.I. director, Robert Mueller—who has become the public face of the Bush Administration's legal assault on terrorism. Ashcroft stepped to the microphones to herald the indictments of Richard Reid, the would-be airline shoe-bomber; Zacarias Moussaoui, the alleged twentieth hijacker; and John Walker Lindh, the American-born Taliban soldier seized in Afghanistan. Like a local U.S. Attorney, Ashcroft has continued to hold press conferences to announce new developments in each case, and taken the opportunity to denounce the defendant in unusually plainspoken terms.

Ashcroft has used the resumption of relatively normal life in Washington to return to a kind of campaign mode, reasserting himself as the Administration's chief emissary to social conservatives. On February 19th, the Attorney General was the featured speaker at the National Religious Broadcasters convention, in Nashville; his speech was a classic exposition of his view of the world. "We are a nation called to defend freedom—a freedom that is not the grant of any government or document but is our endowment from God," he told the group. Then he quoted Deuteronomy 30:19: "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live," thereby integrating into the speech an unmistakable message on abortion—"choose life"—to an audience that wanted to hear one.



In recent weeks, indeed, Ashcroft has displayed a kind of euphoria. "He just seems to be in a great mood all the time now," one of his close aides told me. On February 23rd, he travelled to Charlotte, North Carolina, to speak at the tenth-anniversary celebration of the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, a small evangelical school. There Ashcroft surprised the crowd of six hundred and fifty by concluding his speech with a song of his own composition, "Let the Eagle Soar." With a karaoke-style CD providing accompaniment, he belted out such lyrics as "Soar with healing in her wings/ as the land beneath her sings/ Only God, no other kings/ Let the mighty eagle soar." A few days later, Ashcroft launched a new series of televised public-service advertisements aimed at reviving the national neighborhood-watch program, this time with a focus on terrorism in addition to crime. At the press conference, Ed McMahon, the star of the spots, introduced the beaming Attorney General with the inevitable, if under the circumstances somewhat surreal, words: "*Heeeere's* Johnny!"

One evening in early March, at a March of Dimes event where celebrity chefs served their favorite dishes, Janet Ashcroft offered almond caramelized Brie. In deciding where to congregate, guests seemed to care more about the fame of the chef than about the quality of the food; just the possibility of an appearance by the Attorney General built a sizable crowd around Mrs. Ashcroft's booth. At seven o'clock sharp, Ashcroft did materialize from behind a curtain and put on an apron to help his wife serve. However, he did want to make one thing clear. “Just remember,” he told me, “I don't like Brie.”

Ashcroft now stands poised to join Colin Powell and Donald Rumsfeld as the most prominent members of the Bush Cabinet. In the months since the terrorist attacks, Bush and Ashcroft have built on an already strong relationship. “His conduct in the light of these circumstances has awed me,” Ashcroft said of the President. The nature of the relationship between the two men raises a pointed question for the election of 2004. If Vice-President Dick Cheney's health doesn't permit him to run again, Bush will have to conduct another search for a running mate. As in 2000, Bush would choose between the pro-choice and pro-life wings of the Party. If the President wanted a moderate, Powell and Tom Ridge would be obvious possibilities. But if Bush wanted an experienced, pro-life former Cabinet member—as Cheney was in 2000—Ashcroft would fit the bill. In a recent talk at the American Enterprise Institute, Karl Rove, Bush's top political adviser, said the Republicans' biggest failure in the last race was their inability to rally enough religious conservatives to the polls. “We probably failed to marshal support of the base as well as we should have,” Rove said. “There should have been nineteen million of them, and instead there were fifteen million.” At this point, few would rally the Republican base like John Ashcroft.

Ashcroft dismissed the subject of his political future. “I'm retired from politics,” he told me. But others in Washington see him as a possible successor to Cheney. “If I was the President,” Senator Hatch told me, “I would certainly look at Ashcroft.” Friends of Ashcroft are sure that he would take the job if it is offered. Moreover, people who know Ashcroft say that, like most politicians, he has never given up on what Bob Jones IV called his “unquenchable ambition for the most powerful office in the world.” One political consultant who knows Ashcroft says, “He's running for President. He thinks he is a man of destiny, that the Lord is guiding him.”

Chapter One
We cared a great deal about our clothing, our food, and things like cookware and furniture and fitness levels.
Once upon a time, your father and I were young, urban, and professional.
Some called us "yuppies," but we didn't care - no sirree!
R. Chast

The Spirit of America and Ashcroft 2000, his Senate-reëlection campaign, have continued to raise and spend funds. “I don't have anything to do with it,” Ashcroft said when I asked about the committee situation. “I have not directed any money to it or from it.” Still, according to the latest available reports, which were filed at the end of January, both committees were operating well after Ashcroft became Attorney General. Garrett Lott, a St. Louis political consultant who is a treasurer of both committees, told me that Ashcroft 2000 would go out of business as soon as a minor legal dispute was settled. But in March of last year, when Ashcroft was already Attorney General, his campaign committee bought the rights to the domain name johnashcroft.com. (Lott told me this purchase was to keep the name away from troublemakers.) As for Spirit of America, Lott says that he will keep it in business, in the hope of attracting a new honorary chairman to replace Ashcroft, but he has not yet done so. In dismissing his Presidential ambitions, Ashcroft pointed out that he will be sixty-six in 2008. What about Ronald Reagan? I asked. He smiled and paraphrased a famous political line. “I knew Ronald Reagan,” he said. “Ronald Reagan was a friend of mine, and I'm no Ronald Reagan.” That may be, but it was also something less than a categorical denial.

In Ashcroft's life, there has always been a sense of divided ambition—that he has both sacred and secular goals. Ashcroft touched on this in his memoir, where he wrote, “The verdict of history is inconsequential; the verdict of eternity is what counts.” I asked him what he meant. He thought for a moment and replied, “For me it means that there are standards that are moral and spiritual and eternal that I want to live up to. And people who win the battle write the history, and they may or may not get it right. I want to do what's right in God's sight.” ♦

ANNALS OF SHOW BUSINESS

OAKDALE DAYS

Why do so many terrible things keep happening to one town?

BY LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

Barbara Ryan has not been lucky in love. She was dumped by her stepbrother for a jewelry thief who reminded him of his ex-wife, and later she dumped him for a pretender to the Swedish throne who turned out to be an Egyptian-tomb robber. She was jailed for the murder of her first husband until he showed up alive, she lost her second husband in a mysterious ballooning accident, and she married her third husband three times but it didn't work out. As a consequence of her various marriages, she has been shot, drugged, kidnapped, committed to a mental hospital, afflicted by amnesia (twice), nearly gored by a bull, nearly poisoned in a remote Scottish castle, tormented by visions of herself as an eighteenth-century woman named Bianca, and had her oxygen supply turned off by a murderous uncle-in-law as she lay hovering between life and death. Just last summer, she was caught in a fire intended to kill her archrival, Carly; she lay in a coma, hovering between life and death again, and the unscathed and winsome Carly ran off with husband No. 5. Now, her once beautiful face burned and hideous, she hides in her lonely house rather than suffer the pitying gasps of strangers. Is it any wonder that in recent months poor Barbara has begun to nurture thoughts of revenge?

The shame of it is, though, that she will never be able to avenge herself on the true author of her torments—a friendly yet floridly sadistic man named Hogan Sheffer. As the head writer of the soap opera "As the World Turns," Sheffer is responsible not only for Barbara's agonies but also for those of her thirty-odd enemies and so-called friends in Oakdale, the small fictional town near Chicago where she lives. Sheffer torments Oakdale, but Oakdale also torments Sheffer: he spends his days urging his brain to create ever more ghastly fates for the characters in his charge—bitter and complicated misunderstandings that will take months to resolve, evil conspiracies, appalling streaks of terrible luck—and at night he walks the streets of Oakdale in his dreams. He has five blank hours of programming to fill every week, fifty-one weeks a year, and if ever the thought arises that he may at last have plumbed the very deepest well of human misery he must push that thought aside and create misery anew. He must, in addition, master the countless rules of the soap genre, few of which are obvious but all of which are essential to success. It helps that he feels he has no choice. "I literally have no other marketable skills," he says. "I don't fix things. I'm a techno waste. I don't have a college degree. It's either this or I sell shoes."

"As the World Turns" has been on the air continuously since Eisenhower was President and television was just a few years old. It premièred in 1956, and Helen Wagner, who spoke the show's first line—"Good morning"—is still in the cast. The show has been sponsored from the start by Procter & Gamble, and is produced in a big old studio in Midwood, Brooklyn, an Orthodox Jewish neighborhood halfway between Brooklyn Heights and Coney Island. The studio is a factory as the Hollywood studios of the thirties were factories, in which stories are squeezed out as regularly as sausages, and all the ingredients are assembled on-site: upstairs are hair and makeup, the actors' dressing rooms, and the production office; downstairs are wardrobe, the writers' room, and the soundstage, with all the sets. The

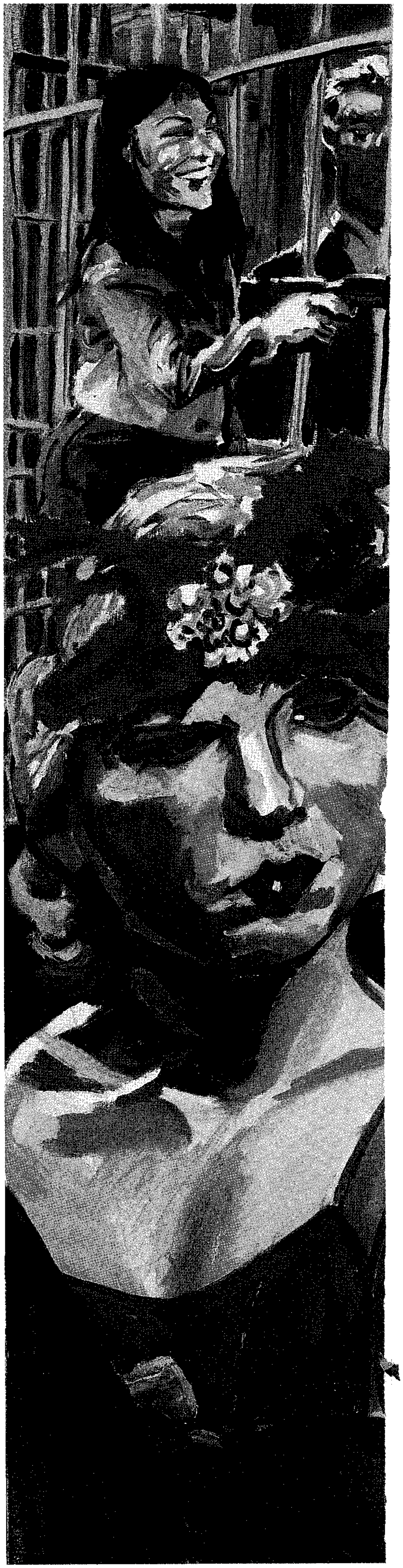


ILLUSTRATION BY PHILIP BURKE

Hogan Sheffer, the head writer of "As the World Turns," surrounded by some of the characters he torments for an hour each day.

"Call the family, nurse—he's about to dictate his last letter to the Times."

• •

Midwood studio has been around since 1915. "The Birth of a Nation" was shot in Studio One when it was owned by Warner Bros., and Esther Williams filmed specials there—her pool is still underneath the floor.

Many of the program's fans have been watching it for all forty-six years of its history. Novels, plays, movies, and other TV shows come and go, beginning and ending, suturing stories into shapes, but "As the World Turns" goes on forever—as melancholy and inconclusive and inscrutably fascinating as watching neighbors through a window. Since it is a rare fan who never misses an episode, there is a sense, too, in which Oakdale exists in its own time, its tragedies and conspiracies unfolding whether or not there is someone there to see them.

Sheffer is extremely good at his job. In 1999, the year before he was hired, "As the World Turns" was nominated for only one Daytime Emmy. The year after he was hired, it was nominated for twenty-three Emmys and won eight, more than a show had ever won in a single year. But Sheffer has been around the block too many times (he is forty-three) to assume that his luck will continue. "There are two hundred and fifty episodes a year," he says. "Some of them are going to suck, and some of them are going to be fine."

One day, Sheffer sat at the head of the table in the writers' room scratching his nose with a pen. His hair was a mess, he was wearing a black T-shirt over a gray T-shirt, he had just come back from sticking his head out the window to smoke a cigarette (Benson & Hedges), and he was slouching in his chair. He took up a lot of space in the room, both because he has a big personality and a loud laugh, and because he is big in general (when he accepted his Emmy last year, he faced the audience with a blank expression and asked them to remember that the camera adds five hundred pounds). Around the table sat six other writers, waiting for his direction.

Sheffer stared at his notes. Over the weekend, he had written a fifteen-page thrust—an outline of the story for the next week or so. The purpose of the meeting was to break up this story into days, and segments within days, and scenes within segments. Each hour would be interrupted six times by commercials, and the scene preceding each break had to end with a tag line sufficiently tantalizing to seduce the viewer into watching the rest of the show. The scenes had to be ordered so that each segment led up to the most exciting possible tag, and the segments had to be ordered so that the second-best tag would lead into the longest commercial break, at the half-hour mark, and the best tag of the day would end the show. The writers at the meeting that day were "breakdown writers," whose job it was to help Sheffer figure out details of the plot and break down his thrust into scenes. Later, scriptwriters, the next group of workers in the story assembly line, would translate the breakdowns into scripts.

As usual, Oakdale was a disaster. Barbara was in a coma in the I.C.U., looking like the top of a quiche. "Just now one of the MONITORING GIZMOS starts to go berserk," Sheffer had written in his thrust. "BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!—and Paul, Jack and Jen jump up and check it out. [RESEARCH—PLEASE! THIS WRITER KNOWS JACKSHIT ABOUT MEDICAL SHIT.] Maybe it's the heart monitor or something. But it alarms them. Paul turns to Jack and says—'Get Bob Hughes in here quick! Something is wrong!' Jack flees."

James Stenbeck, Barbara's evil first husband (the tomb robber), who had come back from the dead four times in twenty years, was about to show up in town. Craig Montgomery, her evil fifth husband, was in jail charged with attempted murder because everyone thought he lit the fire that almost killed Barbara. Carly was back together with Jack, but their union was precarious. Jack was worried that, with all Carly's success in the fashion world, he would be left behind.

"I've got about fifteen scenes in the first day so far, so I'm just looking for a third story line," said Stephen, the writer who was working on Episode 11,555, the day at hand.

Sheffer told him to write a relationship talk for Jack and Carly, but to make Jack bleat less than usual, because he was getting annoying. Sheffer had only a limited number of characters with whom to generate romantic intrigue five days a week and he couldn't afford to have one of his male leads turn into a ninny.

"So my challenge on that is the old keep-him-strong thing," Stephen said, writing this down.

"Yes," Sheffer said. "This is Jack saying, 'I'm just a meat-and-potatoes guy.' He works a shift, beats the dog, fixes his car, and goes to bed."

“But he’s not having a self-esteem problem.”

“No, that’s just it—you can give him his dick back.”

The restoration of testosterone to the show’s men is one of Sheffer’s most urgent concerns. “When I first started here,” he says, “I used to sit and point to the list of male characters and say, ‘No dick, no dick, no dick, no dick, no dick.’ It’s one of the reasons that daytime shows go south—the men are turned into whining idiots while their women run amok. You can’t write scenes where the men say, ‘Why don’t you love me? What can I do to help you?’ It’s horrible.” Sheffer was trying to figure out ways that men could demonstrate attachment without talking about it. There had been a lot of daring rescues lately.

On the wall of the writers’ room facing Sheffer hung two large whiteboards, on which were detailed a few of the innumerable structural constraints that determined what kind of story could be told. There was, for instance, a list of the sets that were currently up in the studio (Jake’s apartment, the police station, the radio station, the old mill, Barbara’s room in the I.C.U.), and a list of characters’ birthdays and significant dates (“July 27, 2000: Jake/Molly 1st kiss”). Also to be taken into account were: actresses who were pregnant or planning to become pregnant (two, due in January—a situation complicated by the fact that both actresses were married to other actors in the show), cast members on vacation (several, including one of the leading ladies, who counted as two, because she played identical twins), people leaving the show (the actress who played Lien, the lawyer and half-Vietnamese love child, had signed up to star in a Broadway musical), Oakdale’s bafflingly complex relationship history (avoiding incest was a significant challenge), and, at the end of it all, Procter & Gamble—the source of many strictures of taste and morality, against which Sheffer struggled daily with a mixture of frustration and enjoyment.

“We don’t have any Carly-and-Craig stuff here, do we?” Hal, another writer, asked.

Carly was in an awkward position. She was known to be both Craig’s only friend in town and Barbara’s archrival, so she was worried that she would be suspected of being Craig’s accomplice in setting the fire. The question was, then, whether she should visit Craig in jail in order to discuss strategy or avoid him in order to placate Jack, who suspected (correctly) that Craig had a crush on her. Carolyn, a third writer, suggested that she lie to Jack and go see Craig anyway.

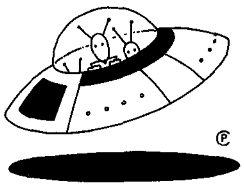
“But I don’t want her to say to Jack, ‘I’m never going to see Craig,’ and then a scene later go see Craig,” Sheffer said, frowning. “It really makes Jack look like the biggest douche bag.”

The other problem with Carly seeing Craig in jail was that Hunt Block, the actor who played Craig, was going to be on vacation until the Tuesday following the taping day they were talking about.

“We don’t have Hunt until Tuesday?” Sheffer asked in disbelief. In fact, several leading actors were going to be on vacation at once. “Jesus Christ,” he said gloomily. “We’re left with three sixty-seven-year-old people and a fucking dog.”

Sheffer grew up in York, Pennsylvania, a small town near the Maryland border. His mother worked in the county laundry; his father was a prison guard and an ex-marine. Sheffer hated school, so after high school he didn’t go to college but hung around York, tending bar and working in a bank. He thought about writing a novel, but didn’t. He read a lot and watched movies and developed strong opinions about them. (“We used to keep a list of things that Hogan hates,” one writer on the show says. “Every single actor except William Holden. Every movie ever made except ‘All About Eve.’ ”) His younger brother, Craig, decided to become an actor and moved to New York, and he persuaded Sheffer to come up and join him. “If it weren’t for Craig, I wouldn’t be here,” he says. “I’d be dead in Pennsylvania, I guess, or maybe still a bartender. I always tell him, ‘You’re a shit, but you’ll go to Heaven.’ ”

When Sheffer moved to New York, in 1983, Craig was acting on Broadway and making movies on the side (he is best known for playing Brad Pitt’s older brother in “A River Runs Through It”). “I’d do one movie a year, and then we’d spend all the money in three months on meals and limousines,” Craig says. “We were living the white-trash dream. It was really fun.” Craig and Hogan shared a bed for a year in a tiny room on West Nineteenth Street, and then they moved to a fifth-floor walkup in Hell’s Kitchen with three other guys, one of whom slept in the kitchen, next to the sink. Sheffer worked as a billing clerk in a leather-goods sweatshop in the garment district, then in a bank in the Bronx, and finally he got a job as a script analyst in a production company. Meanwhile, he met people in theatre, and he helped found the acting troupe Naked Angels. Everyone was always putting on plays, most of them terrible, so he would go to two or three plays a week, go out drinking until six, and be at work at seven-thirty. “Somehow I didn’t die,” he says. “It was a fucking good time.”



In 1990, though, the script reading dried up, so he drove across the country with a friend and ended up in Los Angeles. “That was when I formed this loathing for the West that I have,” he says. “I was in Montana for a week, and it was beautiful. So what? Even in places like Santa Fe you’d go, Wow, this is a really cool part of the world, but I don’t want to live here. There are guys on donkeys up in the hills. I don’t want to live anyplace with donkeys.”

Sheffer hated L.A., but he got another job reading scripts and wrote his own stuff on the side. He wrote an action-adventure script called “Fool’s Gold,” he wrote a kind of James Bond movie set during the American Revolution called “The Black Rose,” and he wrote “The Passion of Paul,” a drama about a young girl who could heal people and a reporter who thought she was a fraud. He sold several scripts and a TV pilot, but none were made, and finally he got tired of earning a hundred and fifty thousand dollars one year and eleven thousand the next, because when he made money he spent it, and then the next year he’d be back to not answering the phone, in case it was a collection agency. He took a full-time job developing scripts for a friend, Mark Johnson, who at the time had a production deal at DreamWorks. “Pitches all day long,” Sheffer says of this job. “ ‘This is a story of something that actually happened to me. I fell in love last summer.' Jesus Christ. Unless it was with a dinosaur, we don't want to hear it." In general—creatively, personally, financially—he was stuck in a tight space.

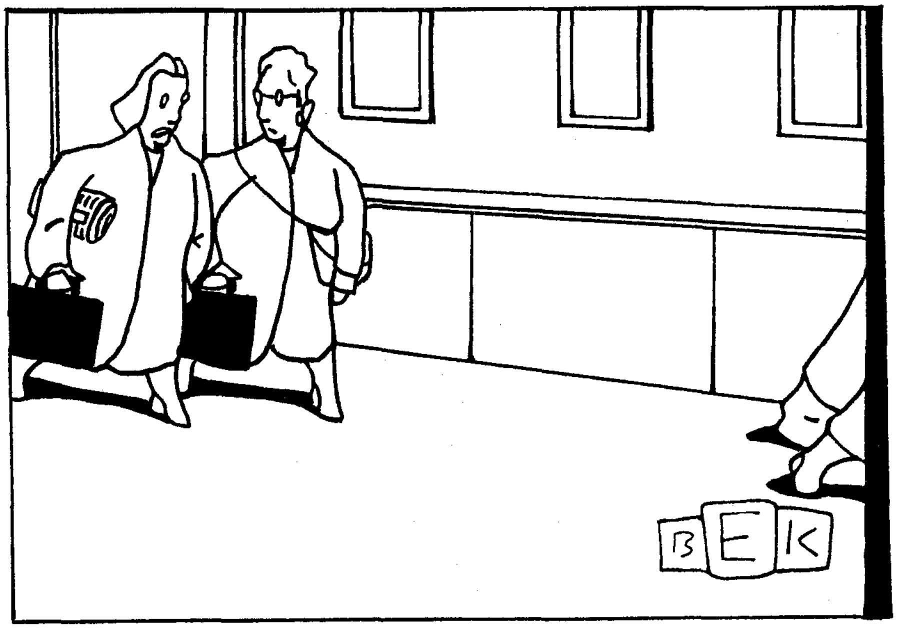
Then, in March, 2000, Mary Alice Dwyer-Dobbin, the Procter & Gamble executive in charge of daytime programming, and Chris Goutman, the executive producer of "As the World Turns," flew to L.A. to attend the Soap Opera Digest Awards and to find new writers. As Dwyer-Dobbin and Goutman saw it, the fact that the show had received only one Emmy nomination that spring was a wake-up call. A friend of a friend of Sheffer's told Dwyer-Dobbin and Goutman about him, and they arranged a meeting.

Four days after the meeting, on a Saturday, Goutman called Sheffer and told him to get on a plane and be in New York on Tuesday morning. Sheffer didn't even have time to stop his mail. He was hired as a writer for a trial period, and eight weeks later Goutman fired the head writer and installed Sheffer in her place.

When the Procter & Gamble executives first approached him, Sheffer had no idea what soap operas were all about—he'd never even watched one—so for a couple of weeks before the meeting he followed "As the World Turns" and P. & G.'s other show, "Guiding Light." "I didn't care for 'Guiding Light,' " he says. "At the time, it was a combination of Mafia stories and a mystical kingdom—I just couldn't connect to it at all. Potentates without countries and princesses in distress, and then you'd cut to the B story, which would be two Mafia guys trying to assassinate somebody in a hospital room. 'As the World Turns' was boring as hell, but it had good actors and good characters." "As the World Turns" was unusual, he discovered, in that it had not recently taken a turn to the supernatural in an attempt to boost ratings; it was practically the only daytime show on the air that hadn't had at least one scene set in Heaven.

The main problem with "As the World Turns," Sheffer decided, was that it was brain-meltingly slow. There would be one scene in which a couple of women discussed a baby, and then, after the commercial, there would be the same women discussing the same baby, and so on for five or six nearly identical scenes. This was not a mistake, exactly—when the show was created, the idea was that the story should be sufficiently slow and repetitive that a housewife running in and out of the room, distracted by children screaming and doorbells ringing and egg timers going off, could still follow what was going on. But now if you were going to watch television you generally sat down and watched television, and Sheffer felt that, in order for a person to be able to watch a whole episode without changing the channel or shooting herself, it just had to get quicker.

Procter & Gamble started sending him script outlines, and he read maybe a hundred and fifty of them, but for a long time he didn't understand how they worked—he couldn't crack the code. He figured out small things. He realized, for instance, that there was something peculiar about soap time, in that it was both much slower than life (an Oakdale day is stretched out over a week or more of real time) and much faster (events piled on top of each other). But he kept saying to himself, "I just don't know what the rule is here. What's the rule?"



"I'm really behind on all my living."

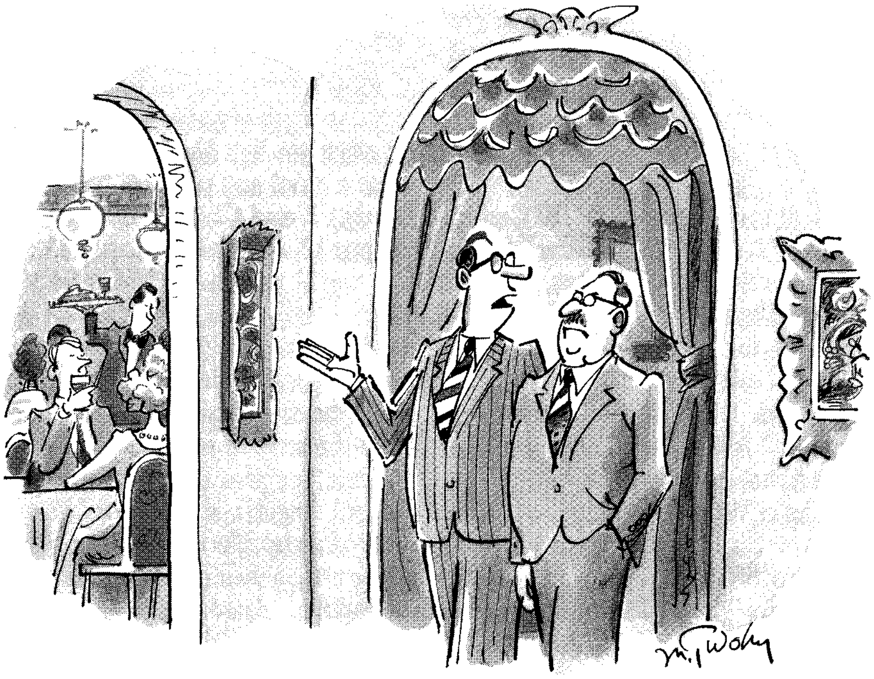
Finally, he got it. Soaps weren't about visual atmosphere, like movies. There were only a certain number of sets, and for budgetary reasons each had to be used again and again for all sorts of different scenes, so you couldn't go cutting and jumping around from here to there—you stayed here. In that sense, soaps had barely evolved from radio. (Every now and then, of course, a show will authorize a bit of extravagance. Last summer, Sheffer felt that the emotional advancement of the plot demanded a near-death experience in quicksand, and his executive producer arranged for the delivery of a colossal vat of porridge.)

Soaps weren't about the quality of the dialogue, either, because they simply moved too fast for that—you couldn't write a script every couple of days and produce Dostoyevsky. (A movie production will get through between one and three pages per day; a prime-time TV show will shoot between eight and ten; soaps shoot the equivalent of sixty.) And, unlike a movie or a play, a soap wasn't about one or two main characters or situations. Because the show had to sustain itself indefinitely and you couldn't focus on one person forever, the characters would emerge into the foreground and then recede: one year one person would be the center of everything, and the next year it would be somebody else. That meant that when you put together a scene you had to make sure you paid attention to every point of view, because everybody mattered. In the end, Sheffer decided, soaps were all about plot. Endless, frustrating, complicated, gripping plot.

In New York, Sheffer soon discovered that there were rules that weren't apparent until you broke them. He learned, for instance, that it was a curious convention of soaps that nothing of any importance could happen offscreen, because it would not seem real (whereas, in a play or a movie, if a character stumbles onstage bleeding from the head, claiming to have been in a car wreck, the audience generally believes him). "Right after I got here," he says, "some outside force was threatening to take a child away because the parents weren't married. Well, they go and get married and show up at the court hearing and say, 'We're married.' In the writers' room, I said, 'That's stupid. Why don't we not show them getting married and then in Act V, when they come in and announce it, it'll be a surprise?' They said, 'You can't do that: if the audience didn't see it, it didn't happen.' "

Sheffer learned, too, that Procter & Gamble, as personified by Mary Alice Dwyer-Dobbin, had opinions, including opinions of the opinions of the fans, which it garnered from the Internet, phone calls to the network, mail, and CBS's new focus-group facility, in Las Vegas. For instance, the fans had recently made clear their distaste for Simon's spiky haircut (Simon was a new character), and so the haircut had been changed. More generally, Dwyer-Dobbin made it her business to insure that Sheffer stayed away from any story that was too depressing or controversial. "The two things she likes to deny me are death and sex," Sheffer says.

In his first year on the show, Sheffer fought hard to rob eighteen-year-old Jennifer of her virginity, because he thought that the show badly needed a young bitch, and figured that a freshly deflowered Jennifer would fit the part nicely. Dwyer-Dobbin, however, resisted. "Hogan wrote a story line in which he wanted Jennifer to get pregnant," she said last summer, "but she's such a beautiful actress—do you really want to see her in padding and pregnancy outfits? It just wasn't what we wanted to do. And I don't think in this day and age we would have an abortion on the show. Not right now. We don't need that kind of controversy, because we might lose viewers. 'All My Children' is doing a gay story line right now, and—how shall I put this?—the ratings haven't gone up."



"The maître d' here is a master at economic profiling."

• •

"As the World Turns" and "Edge of Night," both of which premièred in 1956, were the first half-hour daytime TV serials—the other ones, like the radio dramas that preceded them, were fifteen minutes. (Since 1975, the show has been an hour long.) The obvious way to deal with the extra time was to add more story, but it was the genius of the show's creator, Irna Phillips, to understand that what the extra minutes allowed her was not more story but less. Instead of moving the plot forward, Phillips wrote long, drawn-out conversations in which almost nothing was said. She wrote in lingering, meaningful looks and tense, significant pauses. She inserted what the cast came to call "strange interludes"—whole scenes in which a character would stand or sit in a room looking pensive, while the audience heard a tape of his voice expressing his thoughts.

"As the World Turns" became famous for being excruciatingly slow. Whole weeks would pass when absolutely nothing happened. Nothing happening became refined into a new art. At first, it's true, writers didn't understand that nothing happening on television was different from nothing happening on the radio—you couldn't, for instance, as you could in radio, have a man sit down in a barber's chair on Monday and extend his shave through Thursday afternoon. But, still, Irna Phillips's law of soaps was, as her protégée Agnes Nixon put it, "Make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, make 'em wait." The audience loved it. For decades, with the exception of a brief slump in the early seventies, "As the World Turns" was the top-rated show in daytime. "The Carol Burnett Show" ran an ongoing parody called "As the Stomach Turns."

Behind all the now classic soap techniques—the amnesia plot, the cliffhanging tag line at the end of an episode, the pregnant pause, the long, slow closeup preceding a fadeout—was Irna Phillips. Soap opera, like psychoanalysis, traces its origins, through generations of training and the passing on of wisdom, to a great founder, and Phillips is that founder. At the end of the twenties, Phillips was a dissatisfied schoolteacher in Dayton, Ohio. She travelled to Chicago in 1930 to become an actress, but instead she was hired to write "Painted Dreams," the first radio serial for women, and she was so good at it that by the end of the thirties she had four serials going at once. She never married; soaps were her life. She was famously a tyrant. She refused to call her actors by their real names—she always referred to them by the names of their characters. If Procter & Gamble interfered with her authorial prerogative (forbidding, for instance, the marriage of an adulterous couple, lest adultery be rewarded), she became enraged and killed off characters in revenge. Sick of one longtime romance, she had the couple marry and then had the man file for annulment a few days later on the ground of sexual impotence.

Irna Phillips begat Ted Corday, William Bell, and Agnes Nixon. Ted Corday directed "As the World Turns" under Phillips in the fifties, and then, in 1965, created "Days of Our Lives." William Bell wrote for "As the World Turns" and created "The Young and the Restless," in 1973, and, later, "The Bold and the Beautiful." Nixon trained under Phillips in the forties at a radio show called "The Woman in White" and wrote television scripts for her at "As the World Turns" in the fifties. She broke off to create "One Life to Live" (1968), "All My Children" (1970), and "Loving" (1983).

These days, several generations removed from the founder, many soap writers come from the theatre. It's a well-paid job (ordinary writers earn in the low-to-mid six figures), and steady work, because once you've proved yourself competent, no matter how many times you're fired (and you will be fired often—daytime-writing contracts, like late-night-comedy contracts, but unlike prime-time contracts, come up for renewal every thirteen weeks), the chances are you'll be hired again soon, by another show, because the business is reluctant to take a risk on an outsider. Outsiders tend to overwrite, or they get writer's block, or they get frustrated with the story assigned to their day and start stealing plot from someone else's day, or they try to write in a distinctive voice and mess up the tone.

A good soap writer will take it as a compliment if a head writer says he can't tell which of the two of them wrote a scene. A good soap writer will turn out a ninety-page script every week, fifty weeks a year. A great soap writer, of course, scoffs at a script a week. One early legend, Charles Robert Douglas Hardy Andrews, who started out as a reporter at the Chicago *Daily News*, began writing for radio in the late twenties or early thirties, and for many years he turned out about five scripts a day, seven days a week. He typed from noon to midnight, smoking five packs of cigarettes and drinking forty cups of coffee. His record was thirty-two thousand words in twenty hours.

Writers who come from the theatre quickly learn how different soaps are from plays. No soap writer can long survive who thinks about soaps in terms of other sorts of fiction. Soaps are not stories so much as story—something you eat when you feel like it. "It's as if you wrote a novel and you said, 'Well, let's see, they'll read Chapter 1, Chapter 4, Chapter 12, a little bit of Chapter 13, and then they'll go fix lunch," Michael Malone, a novelist who for a few years was the head writer on "One Life to Live," says. It makes emotional sense that soaps play in the daytime and art plays at night: art is dinner and soaps are breakfast. A movie or a play, like a dinner, can be charged, singular, and memorable; episodes of a soap, like breakfasts, are comforting and, in their number and regularity, undifferentiated. Soaps offer stories to feed on because the people you know don't provide enough of them. Soap characters are part of fans' ordinary lives, not their fantasy lives.

In their first few decades, soaps were an extraordinary success. During the early nineteen-forties, half of all women at home listened to soaps during the day, and there were more than seventy of them on the air. The audience was loyal, even though, in the early years, not only were there dozens of commercials but product placement was actually worked into the scripts. (One example: "I am happy to meet you, Mrs. Nelson, and where in the world did you get that perfectly stunning orchid clip? Why, it gleams like virgin gold, and just look at those gorgeous colors—exactly like a rainbow and sunset coming together in a resplendent display of almost unimaginable beauty.") As late as 1977, fifty million people watched at least one soap opera a week. At its height, according to William Bell, "As the World Turns" had a sixty-four share, which means that sixty-four per cent of all the people watching television at the time it aired were watching the show. (The top-rated show now, "Friends," has a twenty-two share.) These days, the soap audience is twenty million, and the rumor circulates that daytime is dying.

Last summer, Procter & Gamble, seeking, as always, ways to improve ratings, made some changes in the writers' room. It decided that it employed too many male writers who weren't giving the show the emotional depth its viewers expected, so male writers were fired and replaced with female ones. Suddenly, Sheffer found that his job became a lot harder. "With the men, no one challenged me," he says. "The women, they fight and they're contentious and obsessive. I always tell 'em I want to get a T-shirt that says, 'Take the fucking note, period.' "

At one meeting in July, there were several upcoming events to be taken into account. The actress who played Katie was getting married in early September and planned to honeymoon in Europe. The actors who played Simon and Holden had both scheduled knee operations for the fall. The most complicated item on the day's agenda, though, was the gunfight in Malta. Several weeks before, Damian, Holden, and Luke had perished off the coast of Lake Michigan in an exploding boat. It was Damian's second death, Holden's and Luke's first. Luke was Lily's son by Damian; Holden and Lily were teen-age sweethearts, though their romance was unconventional, since Lily's biological mother, Iva, was the adopted daughter of Holden's mother, Emma, making Holden Lily's uncle. As it turned out, Holden and Luke had not died, and Lily and Simon had tracked them down to a small restaurant in the Maltese hills named Caffè dell'Arte.

At the end of the last scene, Simon was lying bleeding in a corner after being stabbed by Dante; Lily and Holden were being restrained by Dante's thugs; Luke was bound, gagged, and covered with a large sack; and Lucinda had a gun pointed at Dante's head. Any number of problems had already presented themselves. For instance, at some point it would be revealed that Luke was not Luke but a midget in disguise (hence the sack), but when to reveal this? There was also the question of lights. Everyone agreed that it would be exciting if at some crucial point in the scene the lights went out, but when? Hal proposed it should be after Lucinda shot Dante.

"But what reason would the lights have for going out after he's dead?" Sheffer wondered. "None I can think of."

There was a pause, during which everyone tried hard to think of a reason that darkness should suddenly descend upon a Maltese outdoor café in the middle of the afternoon.

"She's gotta shoot him in Act I," Sheffer said, suddenly decisive. "She's gotta shoot the shit out of him and blow him over the railing."

"So Lucinda shoots the gun," Carolyn said. "Damian does what? Damian leaves?"

"Good question. Well, first of all, everyone has to run to the rail and realize that Dante is down there with bullets in his head and he's definitely dead." ("Dead" is an ambiguous term in soaps: there's dead, there's definitely dead, and then, rarely, there's dead-dead-dead-dead, an exotic state that must be indicated by extremely violent means such as the shooting of many bullets at close range into a corpse already in a casket, or an on-camera suttee.)

"Simon jumps to who he assumes is Luke," Sheffer continued.

"Maybe Holden does that," Susan suggested, thinking of the father angle.

"But doesn't he have his hands tied behind his back and a mask over his head?" Sheffer asked.

"Oh, yeah."

"The fucking lights go out."

"The lights go out," Susan continued. "Holden's screaming, 'What happened?,' Simon's crawling to Luke, yelling to Lily to get the lights, Lucinda is trying to get the bead on Damian, then the lights come back on and Lily immediately rushes to her son . . ."

"And pulls the hood off and it's the laughing midget. We're just going to have to go with it. Is it believable?"

"I believe it," Carolyn said helpfully.

"You know, we've got people running around Malta looking for the heir to the great shipping empire. I think we crossed that line a long time ago."

"They've suspended their disbelief, definitely," Carolyn said.

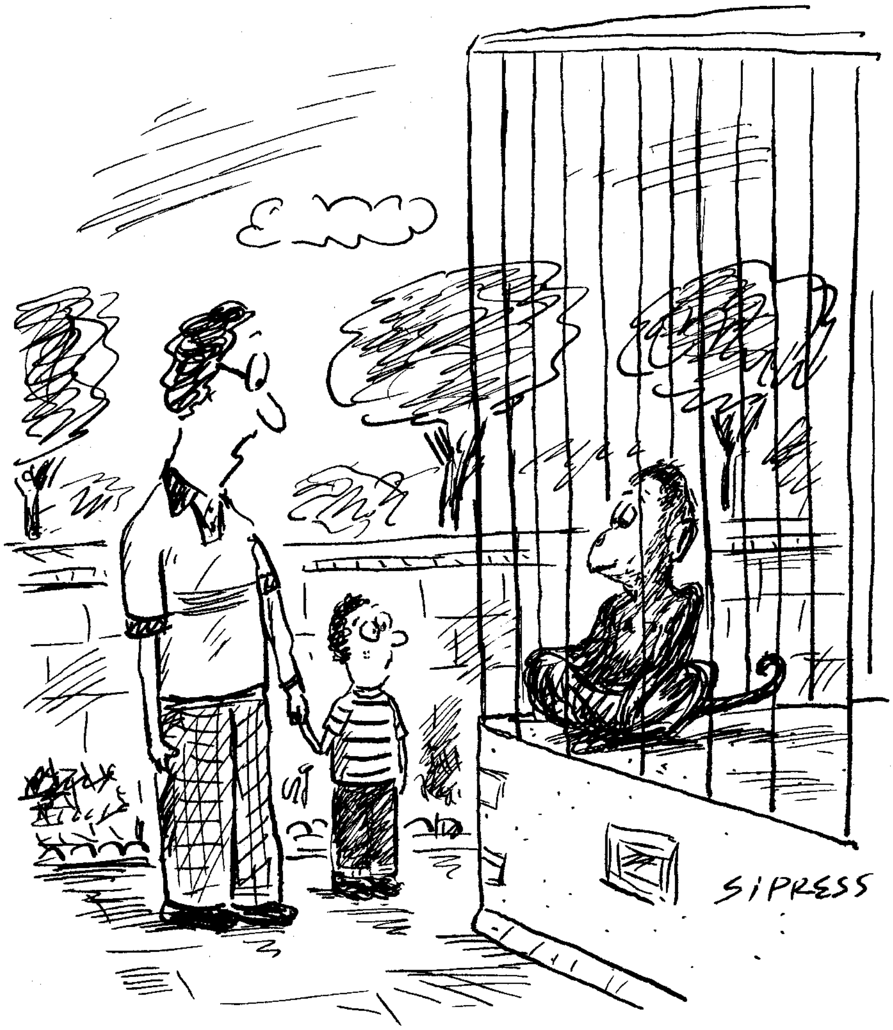
"If not their brains entirely," Sheffer said, and turned to Susan. "So, is it a day?"

"It's a day."

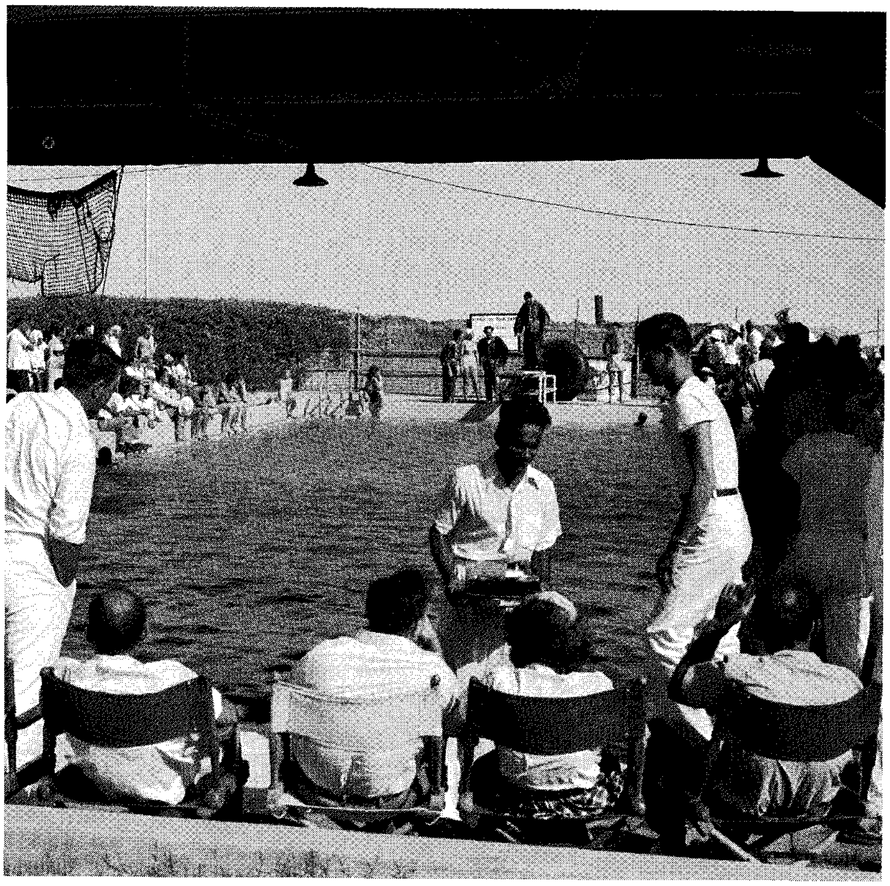
At six o'clock one Monday evening in February, Sheffer sat on a stool in a bar in Hell's Kitchen and contemplated his life. He lit a cigarette, inhaled once, and put it down in an ashtray. He stared at the counter and pushed his whiskey an inch to the left. He took off his glasses and rubbed his eyes. He was exhausted. He had spent the first half of the day on the phone giving instructions to his writers, and the second half putting in several anxiety-producing hours writing his thrust for the week—an activity he would recommence after dinner. The next day, there would be the hours-long writers' meeting at the studio; the day after that he would meet with the executive producer about long-term story lines—he had already laid out the broad plot through November sweeps week. Working on a soap opera was certainly absorbing. Weeks would pass when all he thought about was Oakdale. "It's like remembering a place you've never been, and the memories can be really textural," he said. "Like what it would smell like in somebody's house. It's always in my head. I can't help it."

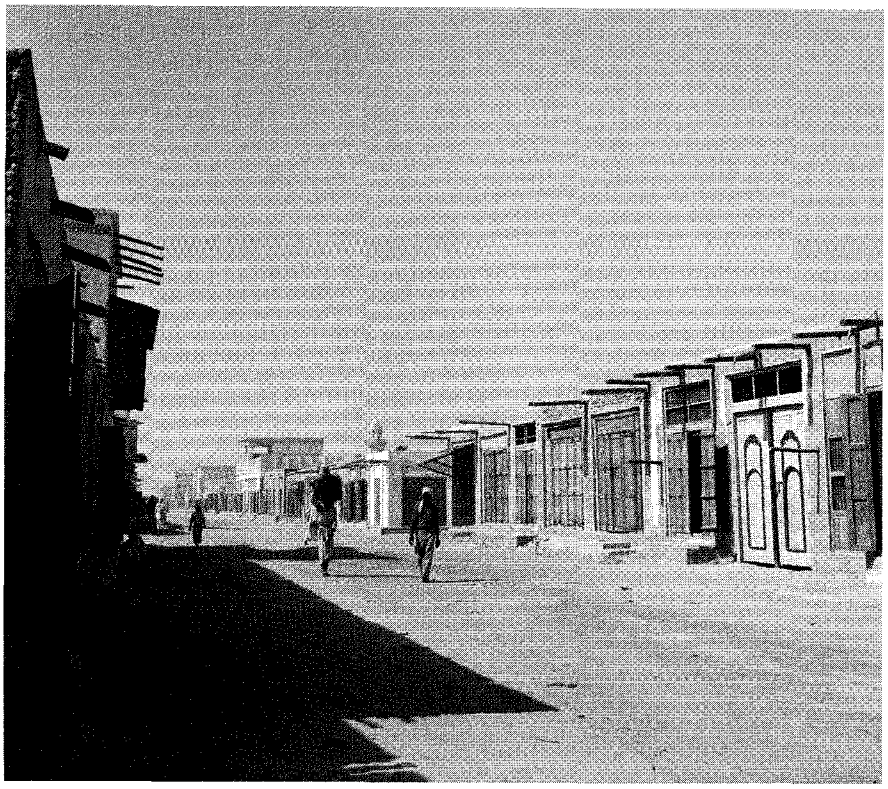
For a man whose job is making misery, Sheffer has a good life. He loves his work. He makes good money. (He won't specify the current figure, but he made just under a million a year in his first contract.) He travels everywhere by car service. ("I can't stand cabs," he explains. "I'm a very big guy and cabs get smaller every year. It's to the point now where I have to undress and Crisco my ass to get into the fuckin' things.") His apartment in the West Forties is a den of horror, but that is the fault of his repellent domestic habits, not the real estate.

And, in the end, if the size of taxis and his waistband and the state of his living room are matters largely outside Sheffer's control, there is always Oakdale, where his whim is law, and where the slightest flickers of his mood—as he runs out of cigarettes, or hears the bark of a dog in the street—reverberate in its fragile institutions like the tremors of a quake. Sheffer does not abuse his power, however. There must always be sorrow and cruelty in Oakdale, it is true, but there is also justice. Craig—despicable but innocent—will be released from jail. Young Luke will be saved. And Sheffer will see to it that, just a few weeks hence, in an obscure Swiss spa run by a sinister doctor wearing red-lensed sunglasses, Barbara Ryan will have her revenge. ♦



"He didn't do anything, Gregory. This is a zoo."





Above: A Fourth of July party at the Aramco employee swimming pool, which was part of an American-style recreation complex. The servants were Indian, not Saudi. Below: The main street of Khobar. Though it looks nearly deserted, by the standards of the time and place it was a commercial boomtown, which had sprung up overnight with the advent of Aramco. Previously, Khobar had been a tiny desert settlement—the storefronts in the photograph were brand-new.

ALBUM

THE WAY THEY WERE

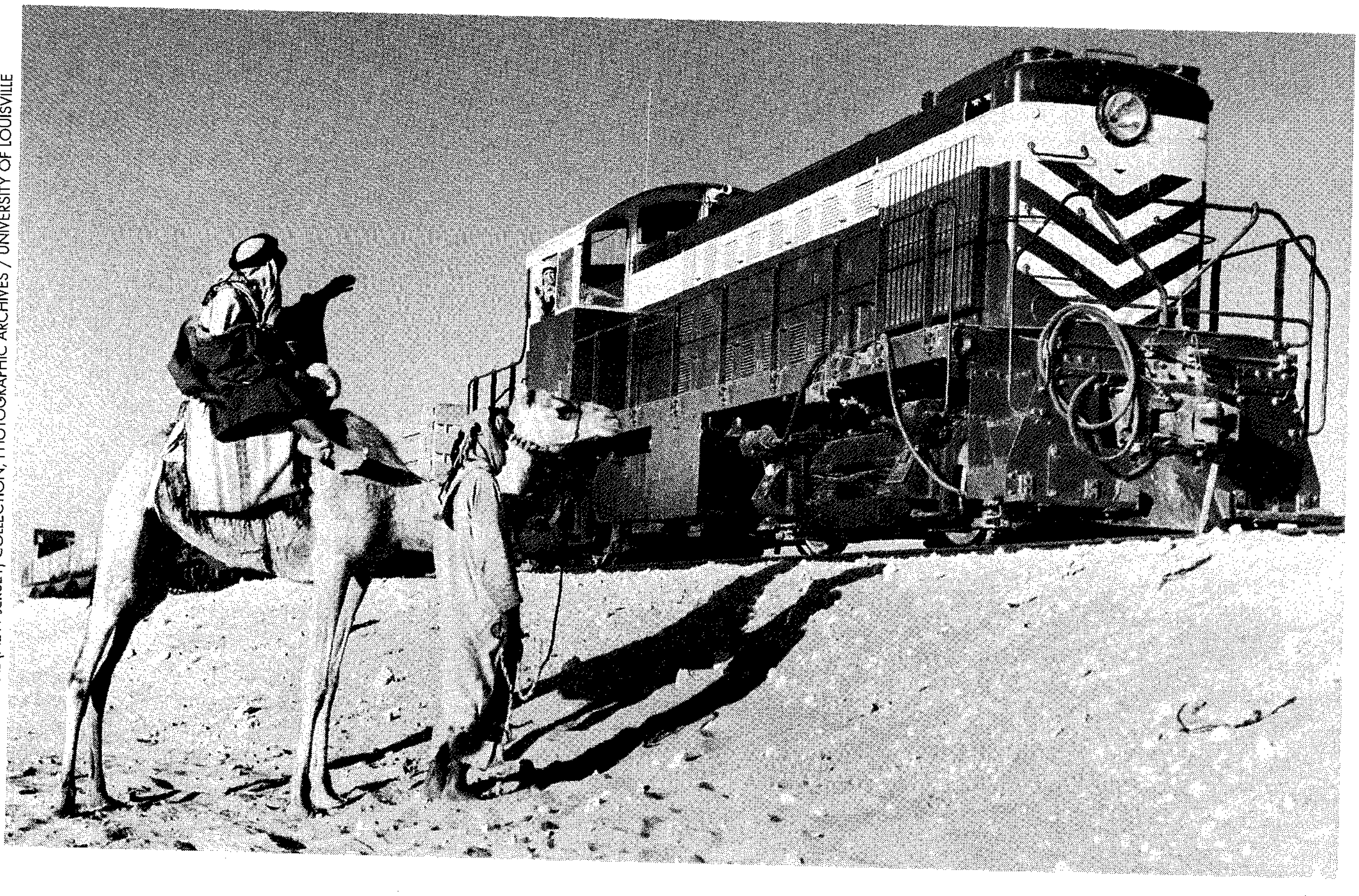
In February, 1945, Franklin Roosevelt, two months before his death, conducted the first-ever meeting between an American President and an Arab king, when Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, came aboard Roosevelt's ship in the Suez Canal. F.D.R. was on his way back from the postwar Yalta Conference, and it wasn't geographic luck that got Ibn Saud on his schedule: Saudi oil was essential to the rapid reconstruction of Western Europe and the successful waging of the Cold War.

Two years later, a young industrial photographer named Harold Corsini took these pictures, which show the early, hopeful days of Aramco, the Saudi-American consortium that developed the oil fields. American geologists and engineers came to a country that was sparsely populated, and barely agricultural. They built subdivisions for themselves, with tract houses and clubs and servants. They introduced modern education, experimental farming, medicine, and machinery. They lit up the skies with flared-off oil by-products from their wells and constructed the first rail line in Saudi Arabia since the teens, when T. E. Lawrence blew up the Hejaz line.

Then the world changed. The first big anti-American demonstration in Saudi Arabia was at the Aramco headquarters in Dhahran, during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Aramco itself was nationalized in the nineteen-seventies. In 1996, in Khobar, the commercial town that sprang up when Aramco opened for business, terrorists—probably Al Qaeda—blew up a military housing complex. If these pictures carry a lesson, it is that radically altering the internal life of a faraway place, even with the best intentions, usually doesn't produce a pacific result.

—Nicholas Lemann

Left: An office doorway at an experimental farm that Aramco constructed in the vain hope of introducing agriculture to Saudi Arabia. (There was a wheat harvest at the farm that year.) Above: Saudi employees walking home from work in the oil fields to their company housing, with wells flaring in the background. Below: Two Bedouins and their camel meet a locomotive plying Aramco's newly constructed rail line, the first in Saudi Arabia in decades.



COURTESY STANDARD OIL (NEW JERSEY) COLLECTION, PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES / UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

FICTION

TONY TAKITANI

BY HARUKI MURAKAMI

Tony Takitani's real name was really that: Tony Takitani.

Because of his name and his curly hair and his deeply sculpted features, he was often assumed to be a mixed-blood child. This was just after the war, when there were lots of children around whose blood was half American G.I. But Tony Takitani's mother and father were both one-hundred-per-cent genuine Japanese. His father, Shozaburo Takitani, had been a fairly successful jazz trombonist, but four years before the Second World War broke out he was forced to leave Tokyo because of a problem involving a woman. If he had to leave town, he figured, he might as well *really* leave, so he crossed over to China with nothing but his trombone in hand. In those days, Shanghai was just a day's boat ride from Nagasaki. Shozaburo owned nothing in Tokyo—or anywhere else in Japan—that he would hate to lose. He left without regrets. If anything, he suspected, Shanghai, with its well-crafted enticements, would be better suited to his personality than Tokyo was. He was standing on the deck of a boat plowing its way up the Yangtze River the first time he saw Shanghai's elegant avenues glowing in the morning sun, and that did it. The light seemed to promise him a future of tremendous brightness. He was twenty-one years old.

And so he took it easy through the upheaval of the war—from the Japanese invasion of China to the attack on Pearl Harbor to the dropping of two atomic bombs. He played his trombone in Shanghai night clubs as the struggles took place somewhere far away. Shozaburo Takitani was a man who possessed not the slightest inclination to influence—or even to reflect upon—history. He wanted nothing more than to be able to play his trombone, eat three meals a day, and have a few women nearby. He was simultaneously modest and arrogant. Deeply self-centered, he nevertheless treated those around him with kindness and good feeling, which is why most people liked him. Young, handsome, and a talented musician, he stood out wherever he went like a crow on a snowy day. He slept with more women than he could count. Japanese, Chinese, White Russians, whores, married women, gorgeous girls, and girls who were not so gorgeous: he did it with anyone he could get his hands on. Before long, his super-sweet trombone and his super-active giant penis had made him a Shanghai sensation.

Shozaburo was also blessed—though he did not realize it—with a talent for making "useful" friends. He was on good terms with high-ranking Army officers, millionaires, and various influential types who were reaping gigantic profits from the war through obscure channels. A lot of them carried pistols under their jackets and never exited a building without giving the street a quick scan right and left. For some reason, Shozaburo Takitani and they just "clicked." And they took special care of him whenever problems came up.

But talent can sometimes work against you. When the war ended, Shozaburo's connections won him the attention of the Chinese Army, and he was locked up for a long time. Day after day, others who had been imprisoned for similar reasons were taken out of their cells and executed without a trial. Guards would just appear, drag them into the prison yard, and blow their brains out with automatic pistols. Shozaburo assumed that he would die in prison. But the prospect of death did not frighten him greatly. They would put a bullet through his brain, and it would be all over. A split second of pain. I've lived the way I wanted to all these years, he thought. I've slept with tons of women. I've eaten a lot of good food, and had a lot of good times. There isn't so much in life that I'm sorry I missed. Besides, I'm not in any position to complain about being killed. It's just the way it goes. Hundreds of thousands of Japanese have died in this war, and many of them in far more terrible ways.

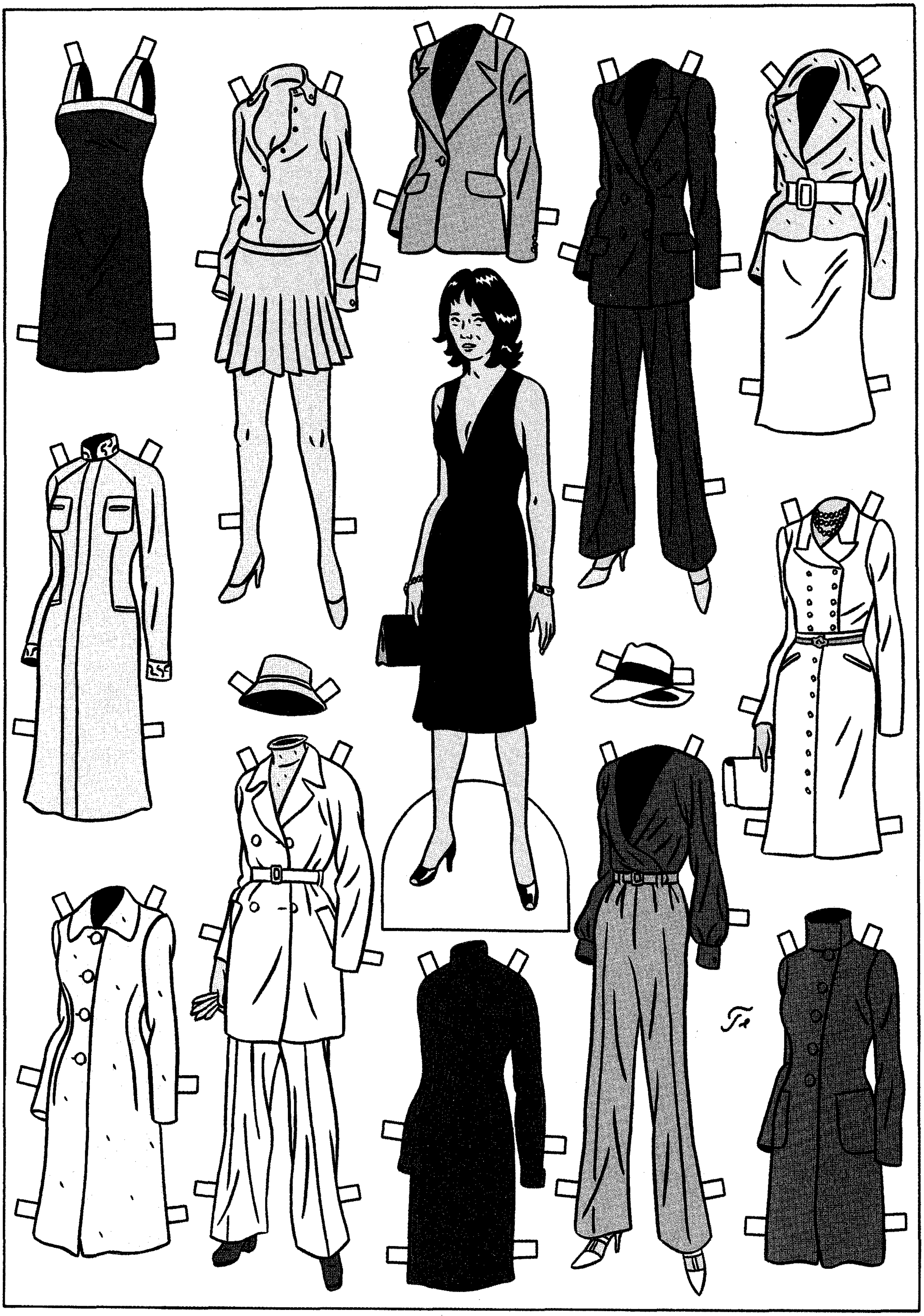
As he waited, Shozaburo watched the clouds drift by the bars of his tiny window and painted mental pictures on his cell's filthy walls of the faces and bodies of the women he had slept with. In the end, though, he turned out to be one of only two Japanese prisoners to leave the prison alive and go home to Japan. By that time, the other man, a high-ranking officer, had nearly lost his mind. Shozaburo stood on the deck of the boat, and as he watched the avenues of Shanghai shrinking away in the distance he thought, Life: I'll never understand it.

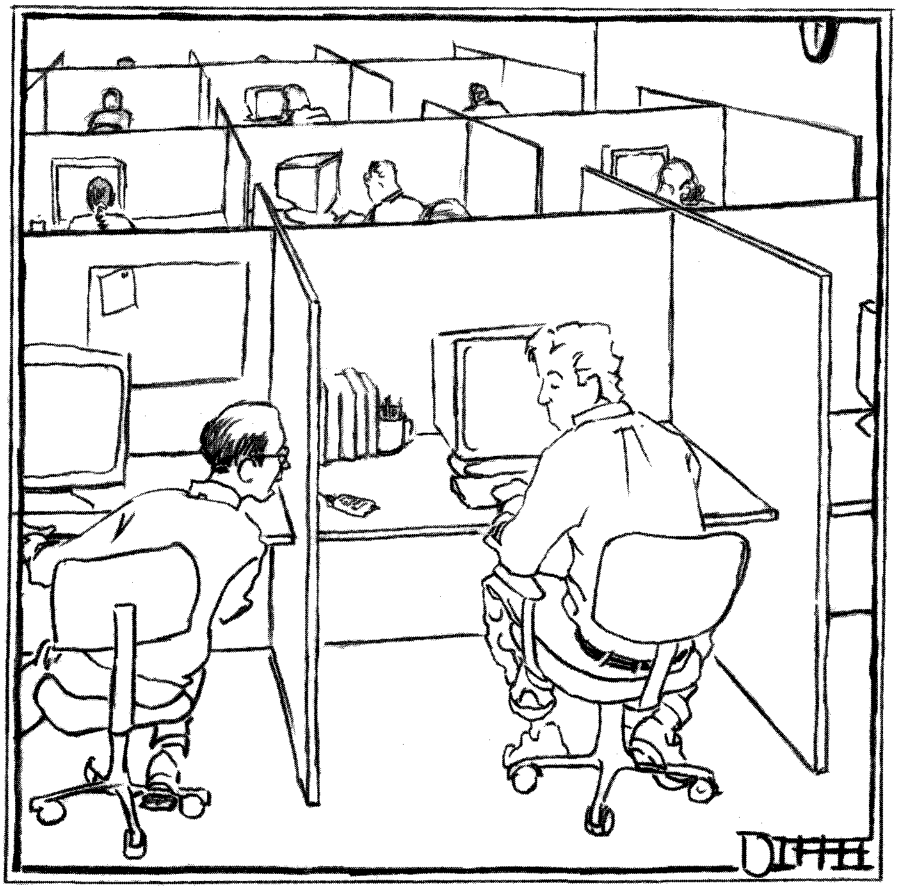
Emaciated, with no possessions to speak of, Shozaburo Takitani came back to Japan in the spring of 1946, nine months after the war had ended. He discovered that his parents' house had burned down in the great Tokyo air raid of March, 1945, and they were dead. His only brother had disappeared without a trace on the Burmese front. In other words, Shozaburo was now alone in the world. This was not a great shock to him, however; nor did it make him feel particularly sad. He did, of course, experience some sense of absence, but he was convinced that everyone ended up alone sooner or later. He was in his thirties, and beyond the age for complaining about loneliness. He felt as if he had suddenly aged several years at once. But that was all. No further emotion welled up inside him.

One way or another, Shozaburo had managed to survive, and he would have to start thinking of ways to go on living.

Because he knew only one line of work, he hunted up some of his old buddies and put together a little jazz band that started playing at the American military bases. His talent for making contacts won him the friendship of a jazz-loving American Army major, an Italian-American from New Jersey who played a mean clarinet himself. The two

FLOCH





"We're tunnelling out after lunch—pass it on."

of them often jammed together in their spare time. An officer in the Quartermaster Corps, the major could get all the records he wanted, straight from the United States, and Shozaburo would go to the major's quarters and listen to the happy jazz of Bobby Hackett, Jack Teagarden, and Benny Goodman, teaching himself as many of their licks as he could. The major supplied him with all kinds of food and milk and liquor, which were difficult to get ahold of in those days. Not bad, Shozaburo thought, not a bad time to be alive.

In 1947, he married a distant cousin on his mother's side. They happened to run into each other one day on the street and, over tea, shared news of their relatives and talked about the old days. Before long they ended up living together—probably because she had become pregnant. At least, that was the way that Tony Takitani heard it from his father. His mother was a pretty girl, and quiet, but not very healthy. She gave birth to Tony the year after she was married, and three days later she died. Just like that. And just like that she was cremated, quickly and quietly. She had experienced no great complications and no suffering to speak of. She just faded into nothingness, as if someone had gone backstage and flicked a switch.

Shozaburo Takitani had no idea how he was supposed to feel about this. He was a stranger to such emotions. He could not seem to grasp with any precision what death was all about, nor could he come to any conclusion regarding what this particular death meant for him. All he could do was swallow it whole, as a fait accompli. And so he came to feel that some kind of flat, disklike thing had lodged itself in his chest. What it was, or why it was there, he couldn't say. The object simply stayed in place and blocked him from thinking any more about what had happened. He thought about nothing at all for a full week after his wife died. He even forgot about the baby that he had left in the hospital.

The major took Shozaburo under his wing and did all he could to console him. They drank together at the base nearly every day. "You've got to get ahold of yourself," the major would tell Shozaburo. "The one thing you absolutely have to do is bring that boy up right." The words meant nothing to Shozaburo, who merely nodded in silence. "Hey, I know," the major added suddenly one day. "Why don't you let me be the boy's godfather? I'll give him a name." Oh, Shozaburo thought, he had forgotten to give the baby a name.

The major suggested his own first name—Tony. Tony was no name for a Japanese child, of course, but such a thought never crossed the major's mind. When Shozaburo got home, he wrote the name Tony Takitani on a piece of paper and stuck it to the wall. He stared at it for the next several days. Tony Takitani. Not bad. Not bad. The American occupation of Japan was probably going to last awhile, he thought, and an American-style name just might come in handy for the kid at some point.

For the child himself, though, living with a name like that was not much fun. The other kids at school called him a "half-breed," and whenever he told people his name they responded with a look of puzzlement or distaste. Some people thought it was a bad joke, and others reacted with anger. For certain people, coming face to face with a child called Tony Takitani was all it took to reopen old wounds.

Such experiences served only to close the boy off from the world. He never made any close friends, but this did not cause him pain. He found it natural to be by himself: it was a kind of premise for living. His father was always travelling with the band, and when Tony was little a housekeeper had come to take care of him during the day. But by the time he was in his last years at elementary school, he could manage without her. He cooked for himself, locked up at night, and slept alone. This seemed preferable to having someone fussing over him all the time.

Shozaburo Takitani never married again. He had plenty of girlfriends, of course, but he didn't bring any of them to the house. Like his son, he was used to taking care of himself. Father and son were not as different from each other as one might imagine. But, being the kind of people they were, imbued to an equal degree with a habitual solitude, neither took the initiative to open his heart to the other. Neither felt a need to do so. Shozaburo Takitani was not well suited to being a father, and Tony Takitani was not well suited to being a son.

Tony Takitani loved to draw, and he spent hours every day shut up in his room, doing just that. He especially loved to draw pictures of machines. Keeping his pencil needle-sharp, he would produce clear, accurate, and highly detailed drawings of bicycles, radios, engines, and the like. If he drew a plant, he would capture every vein in every leaf. It was the only way he knew how to draw. His grades in art, unlike those in other subjects, were always outstanding, and he usually won first prize in school art contests.

So it was perfectly natural for Tony Takitani to go from high school to art school to a career as an illustrator. There was never any need for him to consider other possibilities. While the young people around him were agonizing over the paths they should follow in life, he went on doing his mechanical drawings without a thought for anything else. And, because it was a time when most young people were acting out against the establishment with passion and violence, none of his contemporaries saw anything of value in his utilitarian art. His art-school professors viewed his work with twisted smiles. His classmates criticized it as lacking in ideological content. Tony himself could not see what was so great about *their* work, with its ideological content. To him it looked immature, ugly, and inaccurate.

Once he graduated from college, though, everything changed for him. Thanks to the extreme practicality of his realistic technique, Tony Takitani never had a problem finding work. No one could match the precision with which he drew complicated machines and architecture. "They look realer than the real thing," everyone said. His sketches were more detailed than photographs, and they had a clarity that made any explanation a waste of words. All of a sudden, he was the one illustrator everybody had to have. And he took on everything—from the covers of automobile magazines to advertising illustrations. He enjoyed the work, and he made good money. Without any hobbies to drain his resources, he managed by the time he was thirty-five to amass a small fortune. He bought a big house in Setagaya, an affluent Tokyo suburb, and he owned several apartments that brought him rental income. His accountant took care of all the details.

By this point in his life, Tony had been involved with several different women. He had even lived with one of them, for a short time. But he had never considered marriage, had never seen a need for it. Cooking, cleaning, and laundry he could manage for himself, and when his work interfered with those things he hired a housekeeper. He never felt a desire to have children. He lacked his father's special charm, and he had no real friends of the kind who would come to him for advice or to confess secrets, not even one to drink with. But he had perfectly normal relationships with people he saw on a daily basis. There was nothing arrogant or boastful about him. He never made excuses for himself or spoke slightingly of others, and just about everybody who knew him liked him. He saw his father no more than once every two or three years, on some matter of business. When the business was over, neither man had much to say to the other. Thus, Tony Takitani's life went by, quietly and calmly.

Then one day, without the slightest warning, Tony Takitani fell in love. She worked part time for a publishing company, and she came to his office to pick up an illustration. Twenty-two years old, she was a demure girl with a gentle smile. Her features were pleasant enough but, objectively speaking, she was no great beauty. Still, there was something about her that gave Tony Takitani's heart a violent punch. The moment he first saw her, his chest tightened, and he could hardly breathe. Not even he could say what it was about her that had struck him with such force.

The next thing that caught his attention was her clothes. He generally took no particular interest in what people wore, but there was something so wonderful about the way this girl dressed that it made a deep impression on him; indeed, one could even say it moved him. There were plenty of women around who dressed elegantly, and plenty more who dressed to impress, but this girl was different. Utterly different. She wore her clothes with such naturalness and grace that she could have been a bird that had enveloped itself in a special wind as it prepared to fly off to another world. He had never seen a woman wear her clothes with such apparent joy.

After she left, he sat at his desk, dazed, doing nothing until evening came and the room turned completely dark.

The next day, he phoned the publisher and found some pretext to have her come to his office again. When their business was finished, he invited her to lunch. They made small talk as they ate. Though they were fifteen years apart in age, they found they had much in common, almost strangely so. They agreed on every topic. He had never had such an experience before, and neither had she. She was a little nervous at first, but she gradually relaxed, until she was laughing and talking freely.

"You really know how to dress," Tony said when they parted.

"I like clothes," she answered, with a bashful smile. "Most of my money goes on clothing."

They went on a few dates after that. They didn't go anywhere in particular, just found quiet places to sit and talk for hours—about their pasts, about their work, about the way they thought or felt about this or that. They never seemed to tire of talking. It was as if they were filling up each other's emptiness.

The fifth time they met, he asked her to marry him. But she had a boyfriend she had been seeing since high school. The relationship had become less than ideal with the passage of time, she admitted, and now they seemed to fight about the stupidest things whenever they met. In fact, seeing him was nowhere near as free and fun as seeing Tony Takitani, but, still, that didn't mean that she could simply break it off. She had her reasons, whatever they were. And, besides, there was that fifteen-year difference in age. She was still young and inexperienced. She wondered what that age gap might mean to them in the future. She said she wanted time to think.

Each day that she spent thinking was another day in hell for Tony Takitani. He couldn't work. He drank, alone. Suddenly, his solitude became a crushing weight, a source of agony, a prison. I just never noticed it before, he thought. With despairing eyes, he stared at the thick, cold walls surrounding him and thought, If she says she doesn't want to marry me, I might just kill myself.

He went to see her and told her exactly how he felt. How lonely his life had been until then. How much he had lost over the years. How she had made him realize all that.

She was an intelligent young woman. She had come to like this Tony Takitani. She had thought well of him from the start, and each meeting had only made her like him more. Whether she could call this "love" she didn't know. But she felt that he had something wonderful inside, and that she would be happy if she made her life with him. And so they married.

By marrying her, Tony Takitani brought the lonely period of his life to an end. When he awoke in the morning, the first thing he did was look for her. When he found her sleeping next to him, he felt relief. When she wasn't there, he felt anxious and searched the house for her. There was something odd for him about not feeling lonely. The very fact that he had ceased to be lonely caused him to fear the possibility of becoming lonely again. The question haunted him: What would he do? Sometimes this fear would make him break out in a cold sweat. As he became used to his new life, though, and the possibility of his wife's suddenly disappearing seemed to lessen, the anxiety gradually eased. In the end, he settled down and wrapped himself in his new and peaceful happiness.

One day, she said that she wanted to hear what kind of music her father-in-law was making. "Do you think he would mind if we went to hear him?" she asked.

"Probably not," Tony said.

They went to a Ginza night club where Shozaburo Takitani was performing. This was the first time that Tony Takitani had gone to hear his father play since childhood. Shozaburo was playing exactly the same music he had played in the old days, the same songs that Tony had heard so often on records when he was a boy. Shozaburo's style was smooth, elegant, sweet. It was not art, but it was music made by the skillful hand of a professional, and it could put a crowd in a good mood.

Soon, however, something began to constrict Tony Takitani's breathing, as though he were a narrow pipe that was filling quietly, but inexorably, with sludge, and he found it difficult to remain seated. He couldn't help feeling that the music he was hearing now was just slightly different from the music he remembered his father playing. He had heard it years ago, of course, and he had been listening with a child's ears, after all, but the difference, it seemed to him, was terribly important. It was infinitesimal but crucial. He wanted to go up onto the stage, take his father by the arm, and ask, "What is it, Father? What has changed?" But he did nothing of the sort. He would never have been able to explain what was in his mind. Instead, he stayed at his table until the end of his father's set, drinking much more than he usually did. When it was over, he and his wife applauded and went home.

The couple's married life was free of shadows. They never fought, and they spent many happy hours together, taking walks, going to movies, travelling. Tony Takitani's work continued as successfully as ever, and, for someone so young, his wife was remarkably capable at running their home. There was, however, one thing that did concern him somewhat, and that was her tendency to buy too many clothes. Confronted with a piece of clothing, she seemed incapable of restraint. A strange look would come over her, and even her voice would change. The first time he saw this happen, Tony Takitani thought that she had suddenly taken ill. He had noticed it before their marriage, but it wasn't until their honeymoon that it began to seem serious. She bought a shocking number of items during their travels around Europe. In Milan and Paris, she went from boutique to boutique, morning to night, like one possessed. They did no sightseeing at all. Instead of the Duomo or the Louvre, they saw Valentino, Missoni, Saint Laurent, Givenchy, Ferragamo, Armani, Cerutti, Gianfranco Ferré. Mesmerized, she swept up everything she could get her hands on, and he followed behind her, paying the bills. He almost worried that the raised digits on his credit card might wear down.

Her fever did not abate after they returned to Japan. She continued to buy new clothes nearly every day. The number of articles of clothing in her possession skyrocketed. To store them, Tony had several large armoires custom made. He also had a cabinet built for her shoes. Even so, there was not enough space for everything. In the end, he had an entire room redesigned as a walk-in closet. They had rooms to spare in their large house, and money was not a problem. Besides, she did such a marvellous job of wearing what she bought, and she looked so happy whenever she had new clothes, that Tony decided not to complain. Nobody's perfect, he told himself.

When the volume of her clothing became too great to fit into the special room, however, even Tony Takitani began to have some misgivings. Once, when she was out, he counted her dresses. He calculated that she could change outfits twice a day and still not repeat herself for almost two years. She was so busy buying them that she had no time to wear them. He wondered if she might have a psychological problem. If so, he might need to apply the brakes to her habit at some point.

He took the plunge one night after dinner. "I wish you would consider cutting back a little on the way you buy clothes," he said. "It's not a question of money. I'm not talking about that. I have no objection to your buying what you need, and it makes me happy to see you looking so pretty, but do you really need so many expensive dresses?"

His wife lowered her gaze and thought about this for a time. Then she looked at him and said, "You're right, of course. I don't need so many dresses. I know that. But, even though I know it, I can't help myself. When I see a beautiful dress, I have to buy it. Whether I need it, or whether I have too many, is beside the point. I just can't stop myself." She promised to try to hold back. "If I keep on going this way, the whole house is going to fill up with my clothes before too long."

And so she locked herself inside for a week, and managed to stay away from clothing stores. This was a time of great suffering for her. She felt as if she were walking on the surface of a planet with little air. She spent every day in her room full of clothing, taking down one piece after another to gaze at it. She would caress the material, inhale its fragrance, slip the clothes on, and look at herself in the mirror. But the more she looked the more she wanted something new. The desire for new clothing became unbearable. She simply couldn't stand it.

She did, however, love her husband deeply. And she respected him. She knew that he was right. She called one of her favorite boutiques and asked the proprietor if she might be allowed to return a coat and dress that she had bought ten days earlier but had never worn. "Certainly, Madam," she was told. She was one of the store's best customers; they could do that much for her. She put the coat and dress in her blue Renault Cinque and drove to the fashionable Aoyama district. There she returned the clothes and received a credit. She hurried back to her car, trying not to look at anything else, then drove straight home. She had a certain feeling of lightness at having returned the clothes. Yes, she told herself, it was true: I did not need those things. I have enough coats and dresses to last the rest of my life. But, as she waited for a red light to change, the coat and dress were all she could think about. Colors, cut, and texture: she remembered them in vivid detail. She could picture them as clearly as if they were in front of her. A film of sweat broke out on her forehead. With her forearms pressed against the steering wheel, she drew in a long, deep breath and closed her eyes. At the very moment that she opened them again, she saw the light change to green. Instinctively, she stepped down on the accelerator.

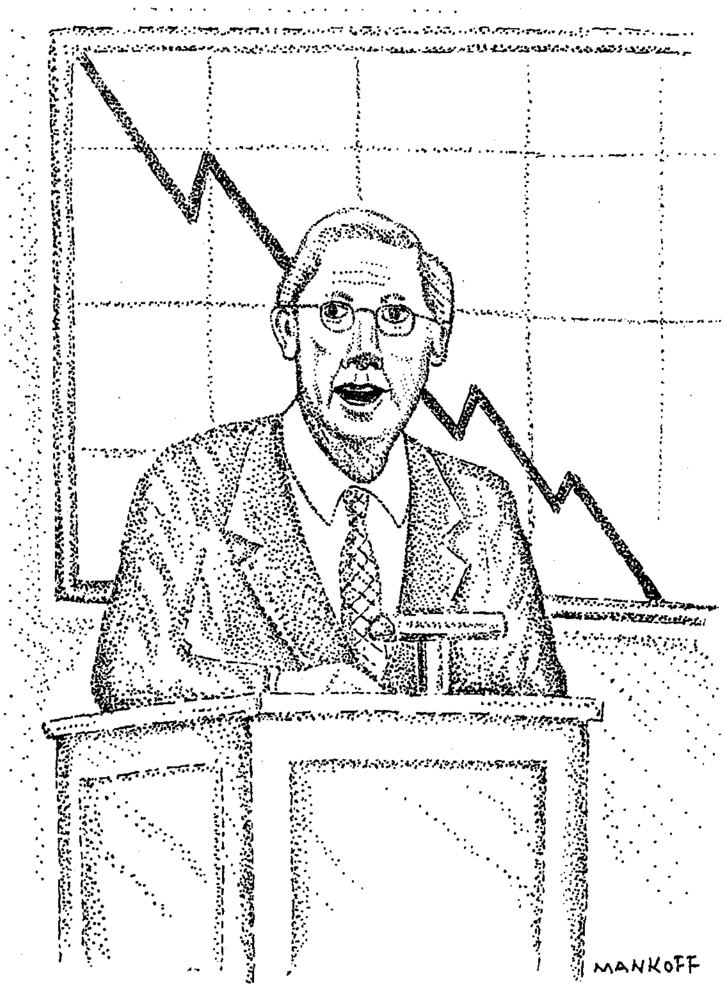
A large truck that was trying to make it across the intersection on a yellow light slammed into the side of her Renault at full speed. She never felt a thing.

Tony Takitani was left with a roomful of size-2 dresses and a hundred and twelve pairs of shoes. He had no idea what to do with them. He was not going to keep all his wife's clothes for the rest of his life, so he called a dealer and agreed to sell the hats and accessories for the first price the man offered. Stockings and underthings he bunched together and burned in the garden incinerator. There were simply too many dresses and shoes to deal with, so he left them where they were. After the funeral, he shut himself in the walk-in closet, and spent the day staring at the rows of clothes.

Ten days later, Tony Takitani put an ad in the newspaper for a female assistant, dress size 2, height approximately five feet three, shoe size 6, good pay, favorable working conditions. Because the salary he quoted was abnormally high, thirteen women showed up at his studio in Minami-Aoyama to be interviewed. Five of them were obviously lying about their dress size. From the remaining eight, he chose the one whose build was closest to his wife's, a woman in her mid-twenties with an unremarkable face. She wore a plain white blouse and a tight blue skirt. Her clothes and shoes were neat and clean but worn.

Tony Takitani told the woman, "The work itself is not very difficult. You just come to the office every day from nine to five, answer the telephone, deliver illustrations, pick up materials for me, make copies—that sort of thing. There is only one condition attached. I've recently lost my wife, and I have a huge amount of her clothing at home. Most of what she left is new or almost new. I would like you to wear her things as a kind of uniform while you work here. I know this must sound strange to you but, believe me, I have no ulterior motive. It's just to give me time to get used to the idea that my wife is gone. If you are nearby wearing her clothing, I'm pretty sure, it will finally come home to me that she is dead."

Biting her lip, the young woman considered the proposal. It was, as he said, a strange request—so strange, in fact, that she could not fully comprehend it. She understood the part about his wife's having died. And she understood the part about the wife's having left behind a lot of clothing. But she could not quite grasp why she should have to work in the wife's clothes. Normally, she would have had to



"Still, I think we can all take some pride in being one of the signature bankruptcies of our time."

assume that there was more to it than met the eye. But, she thought, this man did not seem to be a bad person. You had only to listen to the way he talked to know that. Maybe the loss of his wife had done something to his mind, but he didn't look like the type of man who would let that kind of thing cause him to harm another person. And, in any case, she needed work. She had been looking for a job for a very long time, her unemployment insurance was about to run out, and she would probably never find a job that paid as well as this one did.

"I think I understand," she said. "And I think I can do what you are asking me to do. But, first, I wonder if you can show me the clothes I will have to wear. I had better check to see if they really are my size."

"Of course," Tony Takitani said, and he took the woman to his house and showed her the room. She had never seen so many dresses gathered together in a single place except in a department store. Each dress was obviously expensive and of high quality. The taste, too, was flawless. The sight was almost blinding. The woman could hardly catch her breath. Her heart started pounding. It felt like sexual arousal, she realized.

Tony Takitani left the woman alone in the room. She pulled herself together and tried on a few of the dresses. She tried on some shoes as well. Everything fit as though it had been made for her. She looked at one dress after another. She ran her fingertips over the material and breathed in the fragrance. Hundreds of beautiful dresses were hanging there in rows. Before long, tears welled up in her eyes and began to pour out of her. There was no way she could hold them back. Her body swathed in a dress of the woman who had died, she stood utterly still, sobbing, struggling to keep the sound from escaping her throat. Soon Tony Takitani came to see how she was doing.

"Why are you crying?" he asked.

"I don't know," she said, shaking her head. "I've never seen so many beautiful dresses before. I think it must have upset me. I'm sorry." She dried her tears with a handkerchief.

"If it's all right with you, I'd like to have you start at the office tomorrow," Tony said in a businesslike manner. "Pick out a week's worth of dresses and shoes and take them home with you."

WHEN

In the early nineteen-eighties, the black men
were divine, spoke French, had read everything,
made filet mignon with green-peppercorn sauce,
listened artfully to boyfriend troubles,
operatically declaimed boyfriend troubles,
had been to Bamako and Bahia,
knew how to clear bad humors from a house,
had been to Baldwin's villa in St. Paul,
drank espresso with Soyinka and Senghor,
kissed hello on both cheeks, quoted Baraka's
"Black Art": "Fuck poems/and they are useful,"
tore up the disco dance floor, were gold-lit,
photographed well, did not smoke, said "Ciao,"

then all the men's faces were spotted.

—*Elizabeth Alexander*

The woman devoted a lot of time to choosing six days' worth of dresses. Then she chose shoes to match. She packed everything into a suitcase.

"Take a coat, too," Tony Takitani said. "You don't want to be cold."

She chose a warm-looking gray cashmere coat. It was so light that it could have been made of feathers. She had never held such a lightweight coat in her life.

When the woman was gone, Tony Takitani went back into his wife's closet, shut the door, and let his eyes wander vacantly over her dresses. He could not understand why the woman had cried when she saw them. To him, they looked like shadows that his wife had left behind. Size-2 shadows of his wife hung there in long rows, layer upon layer, as if someone had gathered and hung up samples of the infinite possibilities (or at least the theoretically infinite possibilities) implied in the existence of a human being.

These dresses had once clung to his wife's body, which had endowed them with the warm breath of life and made them move. Now, however, what hung before him were mere scruffy shadows, cut off from the roots of life and steadily withering away, devoid of any meaning whatsoever. Their rich colors danced in space like pollen rising from flowers, lodging in his eyes and ears and nostrils. The frills and buttons and lace and epaulets and pockets and belts sucked greedily at the room's air, thinning it out until he could hardly breathe. Liberal numbers of mothballs gave off a smell that might as well have been the sound of a million tiny winged insects. He hated these dresses now, it suddenly occurred to him. Slumping against the wall, he folded his arms and closed his eyes. Loneliness seeped into him once again, like a lukewarm broth. It's all over now, he told himself. No matter what I do, it's over.

He called the woman and told her to forget about the job. There was no longer any work for her to do, he said, apologizing.

"But how can that be?" the woman asked, stunned.

"I'm sorry, but the situation has changed," he said. "You can have the clothes and shoes you took home, and the suitcase, too. I just want you to forget that this ever happened, and please don't tell anyone about it."

The woman could make nothing of this, and the more she pressed for answers the more pointless it seemed.

"I see," she said finally, and hung up.

For a few minutes, she felt angry at Tony Takitani. But soon she came to feel that things had probably worked out for the best. The whole business had been peculiar from the beginning. She was sorry to have lost the job but she figured she would manage somehow or other.

She unpacked the dresses she had brought home from Tony Takitani's house, smoothed them out, and hung them in her wardrobe. The shoes she put into the shoe cabinet by her front door. Compared with these new arrivals, her own clothes and shoes looked horrendously shabby. She felt as if they were a completely different type of matter, fashioned of materials from another dimension. She took off the blouse and skirt she had worn to the interview, hung them up, and changed into jeans and a sweatshirt. Then she sat on the floor, drinking a cold beer. Recalling the room full of clothes she had seen at Tony Takitani's house, she heaved a sigh. So many beautiful dresses, she thought. And that "closet": it was bigger than my whole apartment. Imagine the time and money that must have gone into buying all those clothes! And now the woman who did it is dead. I wonder what it must feel like to die and leave so many beautiful dresses behind.

The woman's friends were well aware that she was poor, so they were amazed to see her wearing a new dress every time they got together—each one a sophisticated, expensive brand.

"Where did you ever get a dress like that?" they would ask her.

"I promised not to tell," she would say, shaking her head. "Besides, even if I told you, you wouldn't believe me."

In the end, Tony Takitani had another used-clothing dealer take away everything that his wife had left behind. The dealer gave Tony less than a twentieth of what he had paid for the clothes, but that didn't matter to him. He would have let them go for nothing, so long as they were going to a place where he would never see them again.

Once in a while, Tony would go to the empty room and stay there for an hour or two, doing nothing in particular, just letting his mind go blank. He would sit on the floor and stare at the bare walls, at the shadows of his dead wife's shadows. But, as the months went by, he lost the ability to recall the things that had been in the room. The memory of their colors and smells faded away almost before he knew it was gone. Even the vivid emotions he had once cherished fell back, as if retreating from the province of his mind. Like a mist in the breeze, his memories changed shape, and with each change they grew fainter. Each memory was now the shadow of a shadow of a shadow. The only thing that remained tangible to him was the sense of absence.

Sometimes he could barely recall his wife's face. What he did recall, though, was the woman, a total stranger, shedding tears in the room at the sight of the dresses that his wife had left behind. He recalled her unremarkable face and her worn-out patent-leather shoes. Long after he had forgotten all kinds of things, including the woman's name, her image remained strangely unforgettable.

Two years after Tony Takitani's wife died, his father died of liver cancer. Shozaburo Takitani suffered little, and his time in the hospital was short. He died almost as if falling asleep. In that sense, he lived a charmed life to the end. Aside from a little cash and some stock certificates, Shozaburo left nothing that could be called property. There was only his instrument, and a gigantic collection of old jazz records. Tony Takitani left the records in the boxes supplied by the moving company and stacked them up on the floor of the empty room. Because they smelled of mold, he had to open the windows in the room at regular intervals to air it out. Otherwise, he never set foot in the place.

A year went by this way, but having the boxes of records in the house began to bother him more and more. Often, the mere thought of them sitting in there made him feel that he was suffocating. Sometimes, too, he would wake in the middle of the night and be unable to get back to sleep. His memories had grown indistinct, but they were still there, where they had always been, with all the weight that memories can have.

Tony Takitani called a record dealer and had him make an offer for the collection. Because it contained many valuable disks that were long out of print, he received a remarkably high payment—enough to buy a small car. To him, however, the money meant nothing.

Once the records had disappeared from his house, Tony Takitani was really alone. ♦

Translated, from the Japanese, by Jay Rubin.

HEBREWS
S
HEBREWS
HEBREWS

THE PHILADELPHIA HEBREWS

During the early years of professional basketball, Jewish teams proliferated in Philadelphia. The Hebrews were one of the best, going 29-12 on their way to the ABL championship in '33-'34. Like most athletes of the day, they would have known Stall & Dean quality apparel and sporting goods through firsthand experience. Discover them for yourself. Call our toll free phone number 1-866-900-4411, or visit us online at www.stallanddean.com.

Stall & Dean
Athletic Goods Manufacturer Since 1898

CRAMER MAY CHOMP A STOGIE, BUT THIS COP'S NO STOOGE.
NERO WOLFE
New Episodes Begin
Sun. April 14
8pm/7c
A&E
AandE.com/nero

The Jerusalem Haggadah
A Contemporary Passover Heirloom
Aryeh Editions
Tel: 603-526-2513
Fax: 603-526-2514
www.webstazy.com/haggada

ENGLAND
IRELAND
SCOTLAND
WALES ♦
- Rental accommodations.
- Enchantingly rustic to simply elegant.
- Cottages, manor houses, castles.
- London and Dublin flats.
- Weekly or monthly.

As You Like It 415/380-9848

THE CRITICS

THE ART WORLD

LORD BARNEY

Barnett Newman's majestic abstractions.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

Barnett Newman was forty years old when, in 1945, he made the first of his surviving paintings. (He destroyed his earlier canvases.) From then until he died, of a heart attack, in 1970, he produced a mere hundred and twenty or so paintings, about half of which are now in a formidable retrospective at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The late bloomer was not promptly recognized. Even most of Newman's fellow Abstract Expressionists scorned his art's drastic simplicity, and, year after year, almost all the critics, except Clement Greenberg, savaged him. His reputation as one of the great moderns took hold only in 1959, when Greenberg arranged a show for him at French & Company, a gallery on Madison Avenue. The event caused a stir that developed into a storm of renown, though it attracted no immediate buyers. As late as 1955, Newman had sold only one painting to someone other than a friend. For most of the forties and fifties, he and his devoted wife, Annalee Greenhouse, who was a high-school teacher in Queens, lived mainly on her salary. Compared with Newman, the proverbially neglected Vincent van Gogh was an overnight sensation.

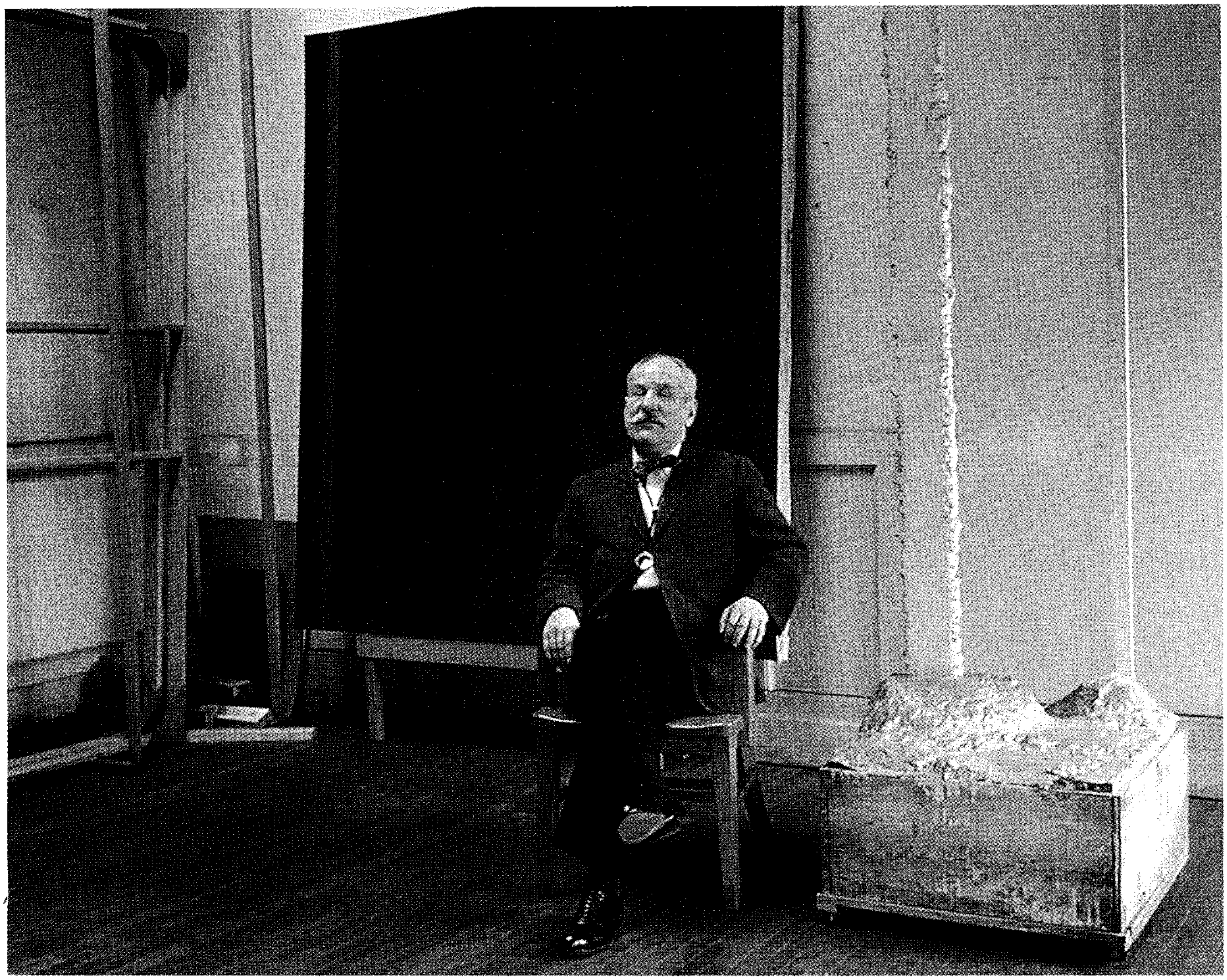
It is useful to keep this background of struggle in mind while viewing the Newman retrospective, which, authoritatively organized by Ann Temkin, the museum's head curator of modern and contemporary art, holds forth with imperious ease. Even when he was ignored, Newman aimed his art at museums. He promoted his monochrome fields of paint, which bear one or more of the vertical stripes that he termed "zips," with grandiose rhetoric. Consider the title of a painting from 1950-51 that is a touchstone in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art: "Vir Heroicus Sublimis" ("Man, Heroic and Sublime"). With this eighteen-foot-long, five-zip, red canvas, the artist advanced an ambition to conjure more spiritual content out of less physical form than had seemed conceivable in any previous (or subsequent, for that matter) twentieth-century art. Most people today take the work's intention and its success more or less for granted, but we really shouldn't. By doing so, we dull the lasting shock of Newman's audacity and lose touch with the significant discomfort of his contemporaries.

Born in 1905 on the Lower East Side, Newman was the son of Jewish immigrants from Russian Poland. While making tentative stabs at being an artist, he graduated from City College, having majored in philosophy, and reluctantly entered his father's menswear-manufacturing business. Crippled by the Depression, it folded in 1937. Three times, Newman took and failed a test to qualify as a high-school art teacher; his artistic skills were judged insufficient. (In fact, he was a crude draftsman.) A political anarchist and an all-purpose gadfly, he ran for mayor of New York in 1933 (Fiorello LaGuardia won), and founded an intellectual magazine for civil servants that lasted one issue. Finally, in 1944, he caught fire as an artist, making drawings that nudged biomorphic Surrealism toward pure abstraction, with an emphasis on color. His zip, which he developed through trial and error, came to maturity in a 1948 painting, "Onement I," as a taut vertical form that is something between a line and a shape and that either divides or knits the composition, depending on how you choose to look at it. The more you try to see the painting as a plain design, the more overwhelmed you are by its irrepressible ambiguity. Newman took sustenance from close friendships with Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb, and, starting around 1947, Jackson Pollock. Like them, and like Clyfford Still, he found a distinctive route to a new kind of painting, one that exploded the traditional picture and, as much as art can, changed how we look at the world.

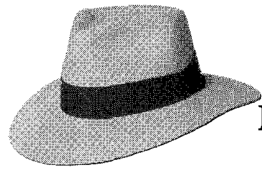
I met Newman in 1966, as one could hardly help doing in the art world at that time. He seemed to be everywhere, in his natty suits and British brigadier's mustache, wielding a preposterous monocle. He was buoyant and very warm, especially to younger artists; his friends called him Barney. He was given to oracular and witty utterances. He swore fealty to "timeless and tragic" subject matter. Asked by a magazine in 1947 to address the question "Why I Paint," he wrote, "An artist paints so that he will have something to look at; at times he must write so that he will also have something to read." His most famous quip—"Aesthetics is for the artist as ornithology is for the birds"—gains weight from his enthusiastic absorption in bird-watching. (He also had a keen interest in botany and baseball.) A polymath and a dandy, Newman lived and breathed the cosmopolitan ideal.

The outsized passions and eccentricities of the Abstract Expressionists—enacted on a tiny, obscure, ragamuffin scene—seem exotic in our jaded age. This show revivifies them. As the movement's foremost born-and-bred New Yorker, Newman took upon himself the drama of his generation's determination to eclipse Europe and to set art on a new

Newman in his New York studio in 1961; another view of the studio. Photographs by Alexander Liberman.



RESEARCH LIBRARY, GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE, LOS ANGELES



Panama Fedora

Genuine Panama woven in Ecuador, brisa pattern, blocked in the USA to the classic fedora shape with traditional pleated cloth puggaree and a 3¼" brim.

No. 1638 Panama Fedora..........$48.00

Sizes M(7-7⅛) L(7¼-7⅜) XL(7½-7⅝) XXL(7¾)
Add $6.00 for handling. Satisfaction guaranteed.

800-324-4934 www.davidmorgan.com

David Morgan

11812 N Creek Pkwy N, Suite 103•Bothell WA 98011

DREAMING ITALY

SMALL GROUP AND CUSTOM TOURS

CARAVELLA ITALIA

888.665.2112 WWW.SEEITALY.COM

Once upon a time I was the CEO of a Fortune 500 Company in America. I woke up one morning, tossed it all in, and now I have a farm in Africa. It is pretty darn unique and we now can handle about 12 or so guests in substantial comfort. I'll never make a dime off this, but I read all the books as a kid, and now I live the life.

Find out more at **www.makulumakete.com**

6 Million Pieces!

China, Crystal, Silver, Collectibles

125,000 Patterns • Old/New • Buy/Sell

REPLACEMENTS, LTD.

1-800-REPLACE (1-800-737-5223)

PO Box 26029, Greensboro, NC 27420 • Dept YO

www.replacements.com

The Best Socks for Walking & Hiking

Buy 3, get 1 FREE!

Every Style, Color, and Size in Stock

HealthyLegs.com

Thorlos

BIKE RIDERS TOURS

small groups, gracious inns and wonderful dining.

bicycling vacations in new england, canada & europe.

free catalog: 1-800-473-7040 • www.bikeriderstours.com

course—and he made sure that everybody knew it. It's easy to understand why he exasperated his peers. He pushed the new art's interest in the sublime to extremes that could—and can still—seem ridiculous. What his colleagues couldn't grasp, because he was truly ahead of his time, was the prescience of a style that would lay down the law for American art in the nineteen-sixties. Color-field painting, minimalism, and Pop art all took bearings from the vast, stripped-down, acutely scaled presence of Newman's work. (What are Andy Warhol's early big paintings except Newmans with images silk-screened onto them?) It is telling that Newman often designed his shows with help from the architect and sculptor Tony Smith, a leader in the evolution of the austere, white-walled spaces that continue to prevail in the world's museums and galleries.

How does one square rigorous aesthetic innovation with hazy religious portent? That's Newman's problem for us. The issue can't be resolved, I believe, but in the face of his best works—preeminently "Vir Heroicus Sublimis"—it falls away. Those paintings rely on brilliantly simple ideas for turning pictorial space inside out by confronting the beholder with the sheer physicality of the canvas. Pollock, Rothko, and Still seized on this trope, too, but always with internal suggestions of visual depth and other picture-ish dynamics. That's part of their poetry. Newman's style is an august prose. Its musically sequenced zips present one-to-one correspondences with the viewer's body. Their mysterious poise, which recalls the attenuated figures of Giacometti, invades and displaces our sense of ourselves, and the effect is a brief but intense experience that begs to be called the sublime: loss of selfhood to something bigger and nobler than we are. This happened to me with "Vir" in Philadelphia. As I stood about six feet away from the canvas, its utter redness ballooned, the nearest zips bowed outward in my peripheral vision, and something like the rush of a dentist's laughing gas suffused my brain. In that moment, any interpretation would have seemed reasonable. If I'd been suddenly informed that the painting's title was "God," I would have bought into it.

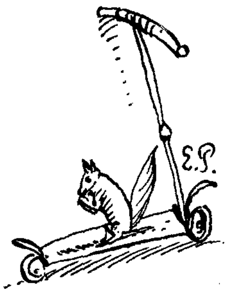
It's only art, of course, and I quickly regained my usual self. The art historian Kenneth Clark once remarked that we can experience a pure aesthetic sensation for only as long as we savor the smell of a fresh-cut orange—about two seconds, by my reckoning. That seems right with regard to Newman, who is imperishably radical for having focussed all his energies on the cultivation of fleeting, exquisite transports on a grand scale. (Ellsworth Kelly does something similar, though in a practical vein that is poles apart from Newman's mystifications.) Newman made things difficult for himself by insisting on transcendent meaning. No wonder his body of work is so small. God created the world only once, we're told. Newman put himself in a position of repeatedly saying, "Let there be light," and having it be so. He was resourceful in rejiggering the once-and-for-all effect that he was after—as in the astonishing, almost all-zip "The Wild" (1950), a canvas eight feet high and an inch and a half wide. His mastery of color led to revelatory feats with strong ultramarine blue and then, improbably, with exceedingly weak aqua. His late paintings entitled "Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow, and Blue" are as stirring as a cavalry charge. He made remarkably few bad works.

But when a Newman is less than supremely powerful one feels a bit embarrassed for him. Where to draw the line between wheat and chaff in his paintings is a thoroughly subjective decision, which is apt to vary from viewing to viewing. I shed tears the first time I saw the artist's attempted magnum opus—"The Stations of the Cross" (1958-66), fourteen mostly black-and-white paintings on raw canvas that normally reside at the National Gallery in Washington—but I was in a tired and emotional state at the time. In Philadelphia, the series struck me as a major failure made up of minor successes, a work that simply cannot overcome the absurdity of equating Christ's ordeal with Newman's sense of himself as a man on a mission. For me, the most stunning aspect of the "Stations" is the signature that he imposed on most of the pristinely abstract canvases. I found myself riveted by those trumpeting flourishes. In the end, Newman's art is all about how he wished to be taken: an artist bestriding history and communicating by house phone with the Almighty. It's pretty dubious, except when he knocks us over the horizon. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Tests of Time, *by William H. Gass (Knopf; $25).* In this collection of fourteen essays, Gass ranges widely across the cultural landscape, offering appreciations of Italo Calvino and Peter Handke, a keen interrogation of the idea of the masterpiece, and a whimsical look at the virtues and vices of lists. Throughout, he keeps returning to what has always been his main theme: the primacy of aesthetic experience. For him, literature matters not because it may be socially or politically valuable but because a well-made fiction is a good in and of itself: "Even a wasted bit of life is priceless when composed properly or hymned aright." The collection goes astray during its middle third, which is devoted to political essays featuring warmed-over tirades against the vulgarities of modern culture and the oppressiveness of censorship. Gass is more convincing when he writes about the things he loves, and shows us the way fiction fashions a realm where we recognize that "our longings are real, if what they long for isn't."

The Outfit: The Role of Chicago's Underworld in the Shaping of Modern America, *by Gus Russo (Bloomsbury; $35).* Despite the grandiose subtitle, this thick volume is a valuable addition to accounts of organized crime in America. Russo, an investigative reporter, pries open the history of the Mob in Chicago, led by Tony Accardo (known as Joe Batters) and his lieutenants Murray Humphreys (known variously as Curly and the Camel), Paul Ricca (the Waiter), and Johnny Rosselli. Showing a corporate mind-set designed to preserve the legacy of more famous gangsters like Al Capone and Frank Nitti, the foursome reigned over Chicago crime for decades. The tales of corruption and violence have a familiar scent—a political payoff here, a midnight hit there—but Russo manages his plots and subplots admirably, and he isn't shy about letting readers know when he's deploying previously inaccessible files. The influence of the Kennedy family alone, especially Joe Kennedy's alliance with the Mob (which helped elect his son President), is given more detailed treatment than in any previous work.



A Double Thread: Growing Up English and Jewish in London, *by John Gross (Ivan R. Dee; $23.50).* To be a Jewish child in England in the forties and fifties was to inhabit two vanishing worlds at once. Thus Gross's nostalgia for the Jewish East End—the Yiddish newspapers that his father read but he could not, the synagogue that, on a recent visit, he discovers is a Sikh temple—is interwoven with a nuanced evocation of England in the era of rationing and bomb shelters. As a schoolboy, he was equally obsessed with Jewish history and with stamp collecting, comics, and cricket. Gross, a former editor of the *T.L.S.*, writes with diffident modesty. He experienced no conflict between his Jewish and English heritages, but little cohesion, either; it was like acting "simultaneous roles in two different plays."

Traveling the Pennsylvania Railroad, *edited by John C. Van Horne with Eileen E. Drelick (Pennsylvania; $49.95).* In the eighteen-nineties, William H. Rau, a leading Philadelphia photographer, turned an advertising assignment for the Pennsylvania Railroad into a major artistic project. Using a specially adapted railway car and two colossal cameras, he photographed everything from the mahogany interiors of luxury cars to freight yards, tunnels, and switch towers. His grandest effects are achieved in meticulously composed studies of the landscape traversed by the railroad—a panorama in the Allegheny Mountains, a log boom on the Susquehanna, the arches of Conestoga Bridge mirrored in the creek below—but in Rau's lens even the most ordinary railway junction becomes a Euclidean marvel of intertwining lines.

The Best Site for Specialty Seating!

We Will Not Be Undersold!

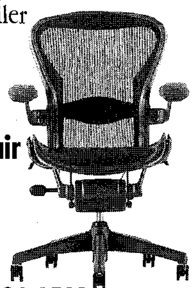
- World's Largest, Fully Authorized Herman Miller Retailer
- All Color Options
- Immediate Delivery

Buy the Aeron Chair for Less!

$799

1-877-628-LESS

www.ny.sit4less.com

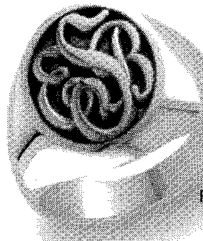


JOHN ⚓ CHRISTIAN
DESIGNERS & CRAFTSMEN

14K GOLD
RAISED MONOGRAM
MAN'S $499

Free Brochure

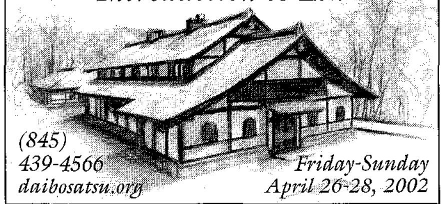
ringbox.com 1-888-646-6466



Dai Bosatsu Zendo·Kongo-ji
A Zen Monastery in New York's Catskill Mountains
Introduction to Zen

(845)
439-4566
daibosatsu.org

Friday-Sunday
April 26-28, 2002



Loon on the Lake Pin
www.rnstudios.com

STERLING SILVER $ 49
14K GOLD $375
w/ Ruby Eye add $ 36

Satisfaction Guaranteed
1-800-235-0471 S/H $5.75
ROGER NICHOLS Studios 2" long
137 NE Greenwood Ave. • Bend, OR 97701 Velvet Box

THE ART NEWSPAPER
Published monthly from London, it is the leading source of hard news and information about the international art world.

"I never feel fully caught up until I have finished reading it."
Agnes Gund, President, Museum of Modern Art

To Subscribe: www.theartnewspaper.com or 1 888 475-5993

THE THEATRE

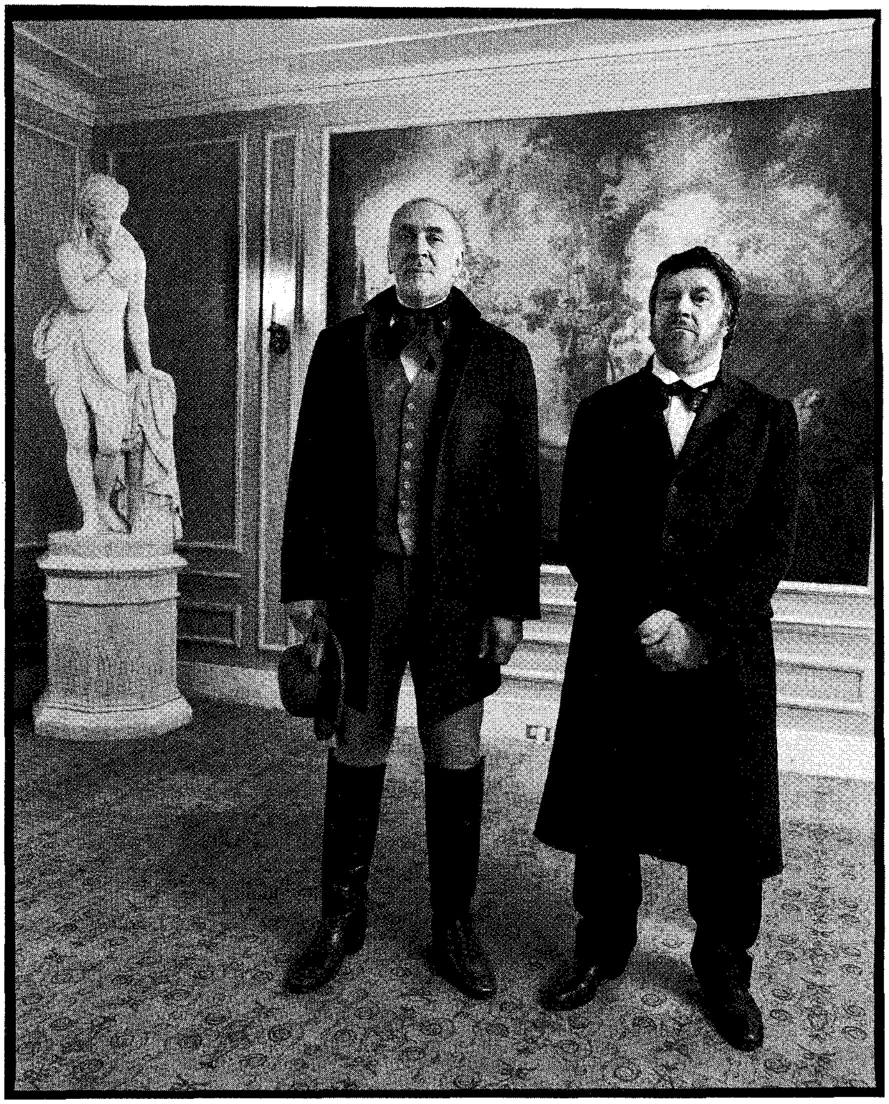
PROPERTY VALUES

Bad behavior in Russia's ruling class.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

Turgenev's little-known 1848 play "Fortune's Fool," now at the Music Box in an adaptation by Mike Poulton, has also been little known under two other titles, "One of the Family" and "A Poor Gentleman." But the current title resonates the most, because the play has to do with the way that both meanings of the word "fortune"—fate and finances—hinge and impinge on each other. Set at a Russian country estate on the day that its young mistress, Olga Petrovna (Enid Graham), along with her new husband, is coming back for the first time in nearly nine years to take possession of her childhood home, the play begins with the usual rushing around of bossy servants. Into the hubbub walks Kuzovkin (Alan Bates). He is a man with a vaguely proprietary air, but it's unclear whether he's a gentleman or a servant; his calm manner suggests that he doesn't have a job to do, and yet he's shabbily dressed, in a black frock coat that has seen better days. As he waits for Olga Petrovna, he finishes a game of chess with his neighbor, Ivanov (George Morfogen, on parole from "Oz"), and in his conversation we hear traces of both the slavishness and the sense of entitlement that form his character. When Ivanov wonders whether they should get out of the servants' way, Kuzovkin says, "They are only the servants, never forget we are the gentlemen." But he has, we discover, been living on the charity of Olga Petrovna's family for thirty years. He is concerned that her new husband may throw him out, and he hopes that Olga Petrovna, with whom he seems to have a bond that goes beyond what is stated in the play—he remembers precisely how old she was, down to the month, when her mother died and she went to live with an aunt in St. Petersburg—will speak up for him if need be.

The mystery of the exact nature of his connection to Olga Petrovna deepens when she and her husband, Pavel Yeletsky (Benedick Bates, son of Alan) arrive and she greets Kuzovkin as Vassily Petrovitch, even though his name is Vassily Semyonitch. He tells Ivanov that the mixup means nothing, but we can't help noticing that Petrovitch and Petrovna are intriguingly similar. Still, the real drama, and the comedy, begins not with the arrival of the newlyweds but with the arrival of the estate's nosy, mischief-making neighbor, Tropatchov (Frank Langella), who flounces in uninvited—if someone of Langella's Brobdingnagian stature can be said to flounce, and, based on the evidence, he can—in order to check out the new owners. Tropatchov is both a clever observer of the social mores of the landed gentry and an "infamous, fatuous fop," as Kuzovkin later calls him, given to dispensing insincerities such as "My worst fear, my nightmare, is that you'll find us all so very dull—so very, very dull, and you'll scurry away back to Petersburg, flippety floppety like a pair of little gray rabbits." (He could be the love child of Gore Vidal and Dame Edna.) For the rest of the play, which is directed by Arthur Penn (working on Broadway for the first time in twenty years), it is almost unnecessary for anyone else to appear on the stage with Langella and Bates, so completely do they dominate the evening. (Benedick Bates, who makes his Broadway début in this play, is taller than his begetter but nevertheless falls under his shadow here.) Just as their characters represent the gamut of the negative qualities of the



Langella and Bates square off in "Fortune's Fool." Photograph by Mary Ellen Mark.

ruling class—Tropatchov, with his smart red jacket and smart tongue, personifying energetic, destructive indolence, and Kuzovkin, with his supplicative, shambling manner, personifying passive, pathetic indolence—Langella and Bates seem to use up all the acting possibilities in the play as they goad and react to each other.

In a drunken scene, questions are raised about Olga Petrovna's paternity (a scene that has as its highlight a long and deliberately tedious discourse by Kuzovkin about being robbed years before of the estate that was rightfully his, and the resulting Dickensian, or Gogolian, lawsuit), and, given that we are in mid-nineteenth-century Russia, questions of property are sure to follow. (If the servants happen to overhear, there are questions of propriety as well.) Everyone's place in the world shifts, except Tropatchov's; he walks away from the damage he has caused with his arrogance unmitigated. In the end, order is restored, but at great cost, and Langella and Bates, each in his own way, are marvellous at showing us the cruelty and the pathos involved in keeping up appearances.

Has there ever been a more promising title for a play than "The Underpants"? After all, no other garment is so close to the facts and the concomitant follies of life. Our expectation that truth will be revealed and silliness displayed is rewarded to some extent in the Classic Stage Company's production of Carl Sternheim's satirical 1911 play (its German title is "Die Hose"), which deals with the consequences of an embarrassing event: a woman's underpants fall down in public during a royal parade. "The Underpants," performed here in a version by Steve Martin, suffers somewhat from the oppressively noisy direction of Barry Edelstein, the C.S.C.'s artistic director, who commissioned Martin to adapt the piece. Brevity is the soul of lingerie, as Dorothy Parker once wrote, and the play duly clocks in at ninety minutes, but the minutes do not fly as they should.

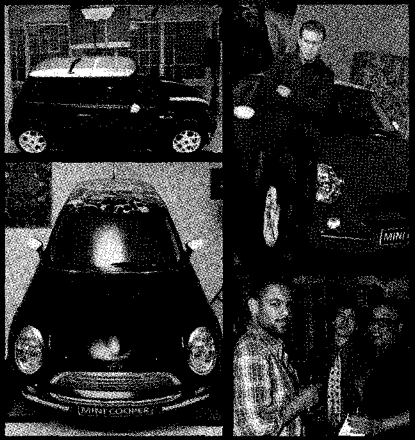
Theo Maske (Byron Jennings), a respectable government clerk, is mortified by what he sees as his wife's indiscretion. "I can't believe this happened to me!" he bellows, undeterred in his self-absorption even when his wife, Louise (Cheryl Lynn Bowers), points out that it *didn't* happen to him. When she adds that the whole event lasted only two seconds, Theo, in a classic Martinism, retorts, "Haven't you heard? Time is relative." Louise's mishap has given her a certain fame, and two men who saw it happen show up at the Maskes' apartment wanting to rent a room. One, Versati (Christian Camargo), is a pretentious, idiotic poet—"unpublished, I am proud to say"—and the other is a barber named Cohen (the amusing Lee Wilkof), who tells the anti-Semitic Theo, "That's Cohen with a K." Later on, a third prospective tenant appears, a sour, fussy old coot (William Duell), who crankily inquires, "Any tubas in the building? Sewing machines, parrots? Banjos?" Then there is the love-starved upstairs neighbor, Gertrude (Kristine Neilsen), who lives vicariously through Louise, and who rolls her eyes, Groucho-like, at the merest hint of sex.

Martin was an inspired choice for this play. He brings out its middle-class absurdities (speaking of absurdities, kudos to Scott Pask for his nuttily underwear-festooned set), and imbues it with just the slightest whiff of sadness. In his version, it's clear that everyone is isolated in his or her own fantasy world, and that in the pursuit of love we inevitably end up chasing our own tail. This is the sadness not of a cynic but of a true romantic.

The pointless production of "The Graduate" now at the Plymouth, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, was a hit in London a couple of years ago, but the flap must have gone out of its wings during the transatlantic journey. Turner's first scene with Benjamin Braddock (Jason Biggs, of "American Pie" fame), intended to pave the way for seduction, is endless and full of dead air, and it turns out to be an accurate indicator of things to come. Biggs is incapable of expression, Turner has the bizarre swagger of a female wrestler, and it's all just awful to watch. Though the adorable Alicia Silverstone (of "Clueless" fame) has a couple of moments that surprise, she is a little too cheerleadery as Elaine Robinson, and the play's only real pleasures are Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father, who depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. Terry Johnson, who directed, adapted the novel and the screenplay, and we'll never understand why. ♦

ADVERTISEMENT

ON THE town



(Clockwise from top left) 1. MINI Cooper with painting by Chris Johanson. 2. Guest Stephen Baldwin chooses MINI Cooper as his co-star. 3. Guests at the Art of Motoring exhibit. 4. MINI Cooper with painting by John Parot.

THE ART OF MOTORING

An Exhibit and Auction of Artwork Inspired by MINI

To celebrate the arrival of MINI in America, four artists were invited to use the car's signature, contrasting roof as their canvas.

MINI-inspired artworks were auctioned to benefit Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation.

Artists:
Chris Johanson
Roberto Juarez
Barry McGee
John Parot

MINI and The New Yorker toast the generosity of the artists and our guests. Together we helped Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation bring innovative art programs to children in need.

MINI

For more information, log on to www.newyorkerreaderlink.com advertisement

AN INVITATION TO RESPOND DIRECTLY
TO THE NEW YORKER'S ADVERTISERS

RSVP

READER SERVICE VALUE PROGRAM

APPAREL & ACCESSORIES

L.L. BEAN. start here. GO ANYWHERE.® Ninety years of providing quality clothing and gear for people who enjoy the outdoors. Visit us today at www.llbean.com, or call 1-800-818-4288 for a FREE catalog.

ART & ANTIQUES

BRANA FINE ARTS. The largest exhibit of Salvador Dali works ever presented for sale is coming to New York. The exhibit will be held April 18 - May 1, 2002 at the Metropolitan Pavilion, 125 W. 18th Street. For tickets, call 1-800-367-DALI or visit our Web site at www.DaliInManhattan.com.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

TIAA-CREF. For over 80 years TIAA-CREF has helped the world's sharpest minds look forward to a secure and rewarding future. Find out how TIAA-CREF can help you achieve your financial goals. Log on to www.tiaa-cref.org for ideas, advice and results, or call 1-800-842-1924.

LANDSCAPING

RIVEREDGE FARMS. The return of the American Elm—Plant a piece of history for only $39.95 plus Shipping & Handling. To order, visit www.americanelm.com or call Riveredge Farms at 1-888-680-1922.

TRAVEL

ALPINE TRAILS, LTD. Hike and cross-country ski the Swiss and Italian Alps with popular author/mountaineer Fred Jacobson. Small groups of active outdoor enthusiasts who also appreciate high-level creature comforts. 30th year! Call 1-800-291-8126 or e-mail ati@bestweb.net or visit us at www.alptrails.com.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Come to this peaceful, exciting, and beautiful country with all the blessings of an island. Enjoy its magnificent blue water beaches, exciting and thriving music, and warm, friendly people, visit the Dominican Republic and then come back again for more! For more information, call us toll-free at 1-800-723-6138.

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO. In the heart of the state lies Central New Mexico. Visit our Web site at www.HeartNM.com or call 1-800-284-2282.

RADISSON SEVEN SEAS CRUISES. Luxury goes exploring. Radisson Seven Seas Cruises offers the highest standards of luxury, service and value on a fleet of intimate, award-winning ships. For more information, call 1-866-272-9437 or visit www.rssc.com.

For more information, log on to
www.newyorkerreaderlink.com

IF UNABLE TO REACH TELEPHONE LISTINGS, SEND
REQUESTS, WITH ISSUE DATE NOTED, TO
THE NEW YORKER READER SERVICES,
4 TIMES SQUARE, 21ST FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10036

020415

© 2002 The Condé Nast Publications, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

THE CURRENT CINEMA

THE WORKING LIFE

French families then and now.

BY DAVID DENBY

The French stage actor Aurélien Recoing, who plays Vincent, the fortyish hero of Laurent Cantet's extraordinary "Time Out," is a blandly presentable fellow, not quite handsome but reassuringly large, with a quick smile and a friendly, attentive manner. He seems a decent and plausible man, but once you get past Recoing's welcoming smile you enter a realm of mystery—the oddities lodged in the hollows of Vincent's good will. Vincent drives his car through the French suburbs and countryside near the Swiss border, calling his wife on a cell phone and promising to be home for dinner, and then calling back with regrets—he's stuck, he has meetings to attend, he has to stay over in a hotel. But he has no meetings, and he spends the night sleeping in the car. With a slight grin, he tilts the driver's seat back and slumps down in comfort, only to repeat the same promises and regrets the next day. After a while, we realize that Vincent has been canned from a high-level consulting position and doesn't have the courage to tell his family. When he does get home, he hints that he has taken a new job. Like a corporate Willy Loman, he talks wanly to his wife and parents of his "enthusiasm." But he's infuriatingly evasive about what he's actually doing.

Anyone who has ever skipped out on work and then lied about it—that is to say, everyone—should enjoy this wryly truthful movie. But perhaps not everyone will be prepared for how far Cantet goes into states of disaffection and imposture; and perhaps some moviegoers will be startled by so lyrical and meditative an approach to what seems like a commonplace subject—a businessman's funk in the period between jobs. Cantet turns the act of playing hooky into an existential drama that deepens into a metaphysical conundrum: What, after all, is the nature of work in a modern global economy, in which the First World players like Vincent seem to be constantly moving abstractions around on an endless flowchart of possibilities? In such an economy, what in our lives remains real for us? On a trip to Geneva, Vincent hangs out in the lobby of a swank consulting firm and picks up some serviceable gibberish about investing in Africa, creating management teams, and so on. He then tells old friends and former colleagues that he's a U.N. official running private investment on the side, and his manner is so gently reassuring that he easily fleeces them. But Vincent is neither insane nor (by nature) a criminal. He's a guilt-ridden fantasist and an escape artist who can't bear to disappoint his family and friends. His beautiful wife (Karin Viard), with whom he's distant and placating, wants to believe in him, but his surly adolescent son, who is quickly developing a secret life of his own, is suspicious, and Vincent tries desperately to win the boy over. Somehow Vincent thinks it will all come out right, that he can hold everything in place.

As his fakery expands, we may become deeply apprehensive. We imagine that some catastrophe—murder or suicide—will overtake Vincent, or perhaps an ugly mess comparable to the goings on in the 1993 Joel Schumacher film, "Falling Down," in which Michael Douglas loses his job, freaks out on a Los Angeles freeway, and takes a bat to a Korean convenience store. That's the American way with alienation: turn it into violently explosive melodrama. But Cantet is after something subtler, deeper, and more insidiously wounding. As Vincent

The New Yorker (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for six combined issues: Feb. 18 & 25, Apr. 22 & 29, June 17 & 24, Aug. 19 & 26, Oct. 14 & 21, Dec. 23 & 30) by The Condé Nast Publications Inc. (4 Times Square, N.Y., N.Y. 10036-6592), which is a subsidiary of Advance Publications, Inc. Vol. LXXVIII, No. 8, April 15, 2002. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Publications Mail Agreement No. 40644503. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037-0684. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

drives around the handsome landscapes clothed by night in hushed gray tones, he seems to have entered into a dream. He withdraws into a desperate ideal of freedom, defining his private self in opposition to the public world of meetings and deals. But we shouldn't let the pictorial beauty or the anguished chamber-music score, by Jocelyn Pook, distract us from the ripely satirical strain running through "Time Out." In the modern global economy, innumerable consultants and financial people spend their time slinging jargon back and forth. Vincent's lingo has the flimsiness of a dematerialized world in which talk of "restructuring" and "privatization" takes the place of actual goods and labor. He gets by with his hoax because no one can tell the difference between his invented nonsense and the real nonsense. He's deeply alienated from the work he did when he was employed, and the similarly alienated people he talks to—including his wife, who gave up her dream of becoming a professor—become silent and glassy-eyed, allowing his words to fall into the limbo of their own unfulfilled desires. Laurent Cantet, who also directed "Human Resources" (2000), suggests that a certain impressive-sounding vagueness has taken hold in upper-middle-class life. The only one who correctly reads Vincent is a lowlife swindler, Jean-Michel (Serge Livrozet), who smuggles cheap foreign imitations of brand-name consumer goods into the French market. With something like relief, Vincent falls into the clutches of this sinister but oddly reassuring man, who at least deals in tangibly fake watches, sneakers, and T-shirts.

"Time Out" is one of the most insistently subjective of recent films. We are placed inside Vincent's head, caught up in his labyrinthine put-ons, lulled by the landscapes appearing through his windshield. When we observe him from the outside, we try to decode him—the rubbery adaptability of Recoing's features makes him perfectly suited to play a man with a shifting identity. In the end, we are split between wanting Vincent to get away with it and wanting him to be taken down. Perhaps we feel the latter emotion because we are threatened by what the movie says about ourselves. "Time Out" certainly shoots an arrow through the heart of any film critic who travels around a semi-imaginary landscape of screening rooms. Fortunately, there are remarkable films like "Time Out" to put some grit into the job. Like Michael Haneke's recent film, "The Piano Teacher," this movie makes one grateful that a serious European art cinema still exists. The characters in both pictures have active and dangerous inner lives unavailable to the people in American movies. Vincent is globalism's fool, and the movie ends not with the worked-up catastrophe of violence but with a true catastrophe (for Vincent, anyway), in which this businessman has an actual meeting at last and gets nailed, with enduringly comical misery, to his cross.

TOM BACHTELL

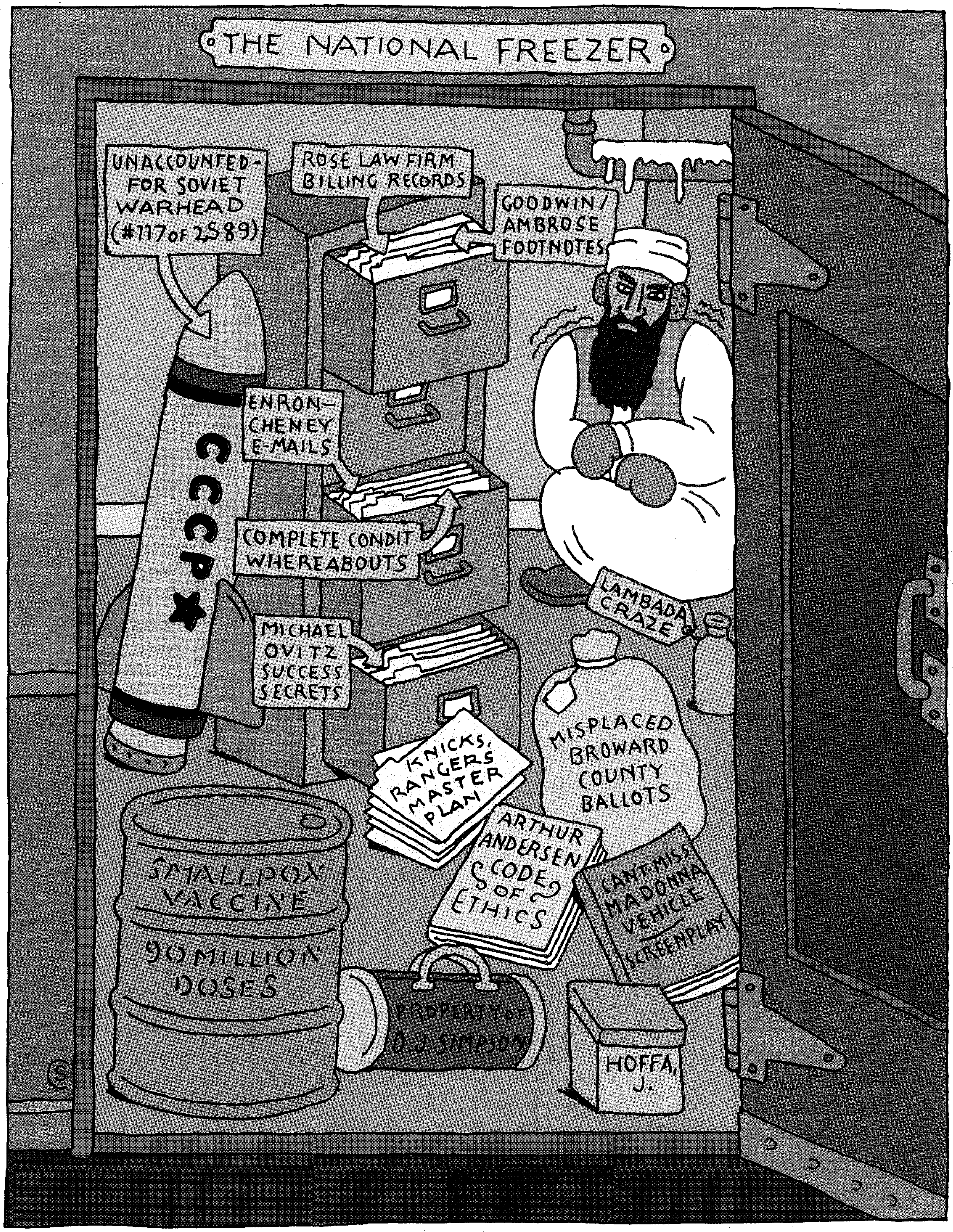
Emmanuelle Béart and Charles Berling in "Les Destinées."

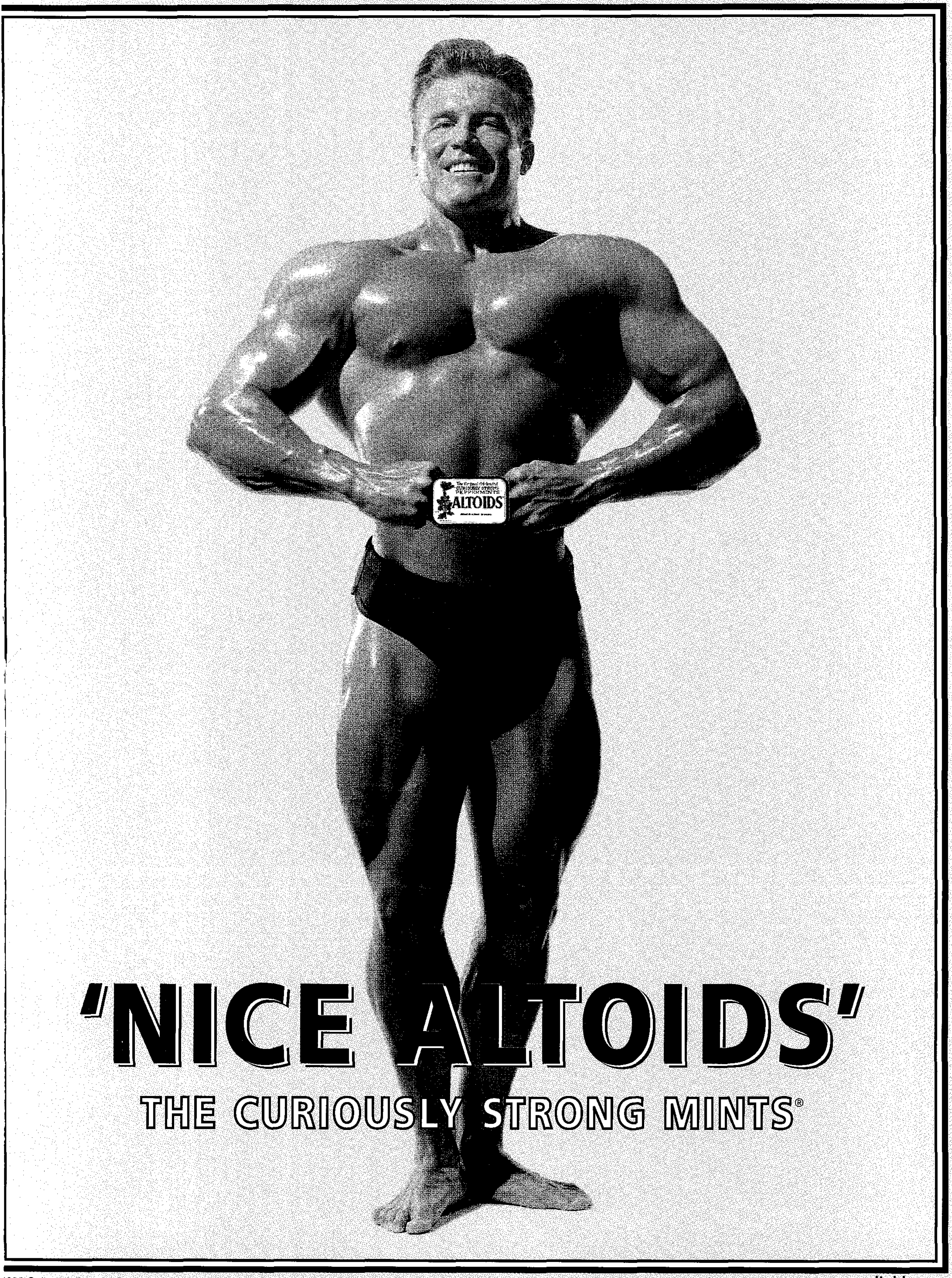
By contrast with the business-school vapor of "Time Out," the manufacture of palpable goods by the sweaty labor of men and women stands at the center of Olivier Assayas's lovely epic, "Les Destinées." This quietly sumptuous movie—the air is soft, and everyone speaks in clipped tones—was adapted from a dynastic novel by Jacques Chardonne, which begins in 1900 and traces for three decades the interlocked affairs of two large haut-bourgeois Protestant families, one of which controls a cognac company in the Charente section of France, the other a porcelain factory in Limoges. The hero, Jean Barnery (Charles Berling), an intense, fine-grained young man, who is a minister in the fictional town of Barbizac, dismisses the wife whom he doesn't love (Isabelle Huppert) and drops out of the ministry in shame, only to fall in love with the ravishing young Pauline (Emmanuelle Béart). A misty mountain idyll in Switzerland follows, and then, for Jean, now married to Pauline, a return to the family fold and control of the porcelain works, where he becomes, through the decades, an increasingly conservative industrialist in a time of intense labor disputes. The portrait, however, is largely sympathetic: Jean struggles to maintain the quality of his goods as mass-production methods from rivals threaten the Barnery hold on the luxury market in France and America. The proper color and glaze of a dish is repeatedly celebrated here as a triumph of love. I had thought of Assayas, after his "Irma Vep" (1996), as a quintessential modernist, but "Les Destinées" exhibits a flowing classicism and lightness. Unlike such comparable family epics as Visconti's "The Leopard" and Bertolucci's "1900," the movie is unemphatic and largely fleeting—the most substantial moments pass in a semi-whisper. "Les Destinées" perhaps takes its stylistic cue from the Protestantism of the Barnerys, who, in the midst of a Catholic country, train themselves in austerity and discipline. I was fascinated by the shifts in manners and décor, and by the gently beautiful compositions (Bonnard and Vuillard appear to be the dominant influences) which frame what is essentially the story of a long marriage and an unceasing devotion to a family business that seems forever in crisis but remains as sustaining as France itself. ♦

THE BACK PAGE BY SEYMOUR CHWAST AND ANDY BOROWITZ

WASHINGTON—A pharmaceutical company says it has 70 million to 90 million doses of smallpox vaccine in its freezers, bolstering the nation's inventory and ensuring an adequate supply in the event of a bioterrorist attack, according to government sources.

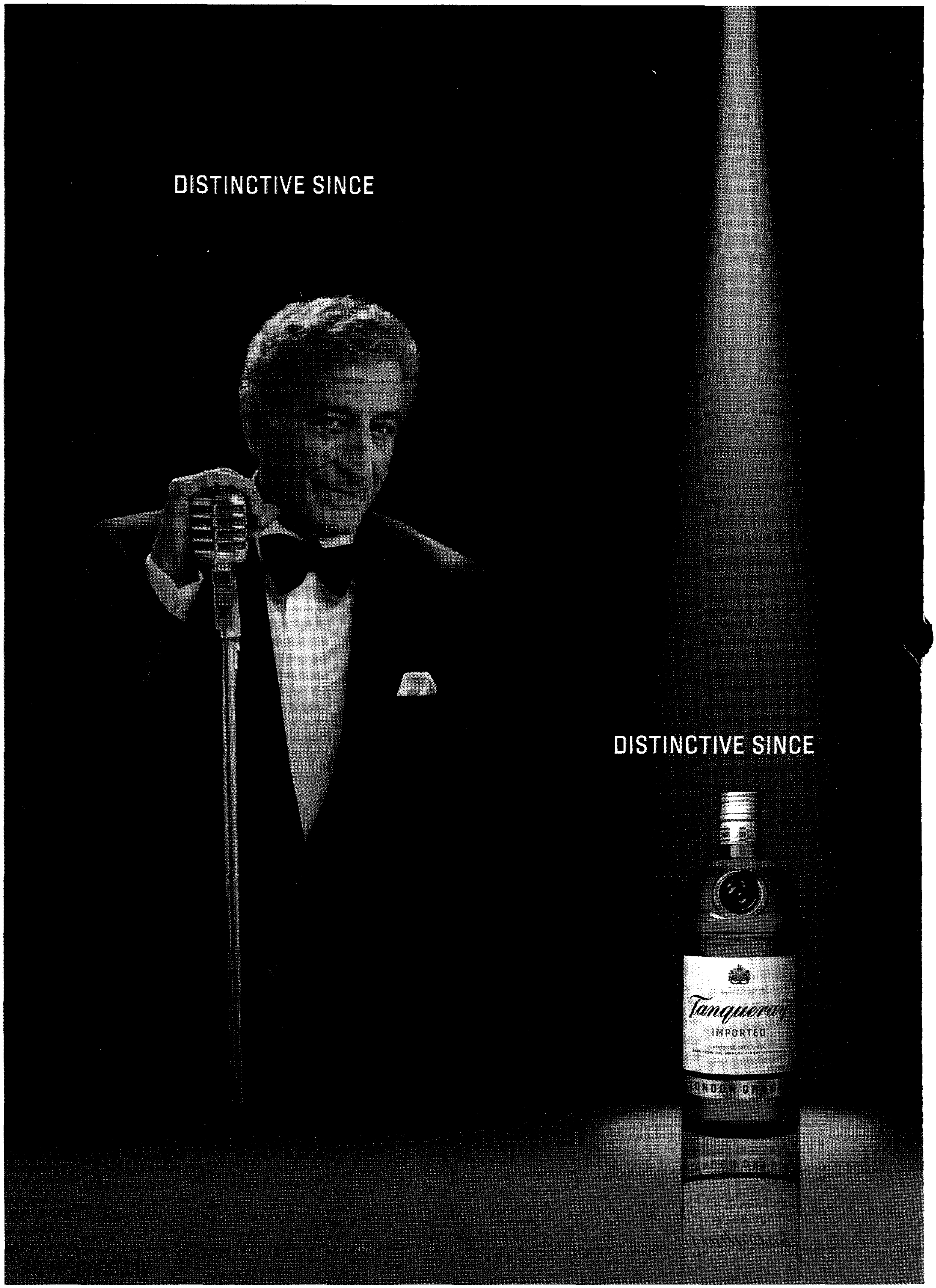
—*Associated Press.*


THE NATIONAL FREEZER
UNACCOUNTED-FOR SOVIET WARHEAD (#117 OF 2,589)
ROSE LAW FIRM BILLING RECORDS
GOODWIN/AMBROSE FOOTNOTES
CCCP
ENRON-CHENEY E-MAILS
COMPLETE CONDIT WHEREABOUTS
MICHAEL OVITZ SUCCESS SECRETS
LAMBADA CRAZE
KNICKS, RANGERS MASTER PLAN
MISPLACED BROWARD COUNTY BALLOTS
ARTHUR ANDERSEN CODE OF ETHICS
CAN'T-MISS MADONNA VEHICLE SCREENPLAY
SMALLPOX VACCINE 90 MILLION DOSES
PROPERTY OF O.J. SIMPSON
HOFFA, J.


CURIOUSLY STRONG
PEPPERMINTS
ALTOIDS
'NICE ALTOIDS'
THE CURIOUSLY STRONG MINTS®

1998 Callard & Bowser-Suchard Inc.

www.altoids.com


DISTINCTIVE SINCE
DISTINCTIVE SINCE
Tanqueray
IMPORTED
LONDON DRY

IMPORTED ENGLISH GIN 47.3% ALC./VOL., 100% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS, SCHIEFFELIN & SOMERSET CO., NEW YORK, N.Y. © 2002 GUINNESS UNITED DISTILLERS & VINTNERS AMSTERDAM B.V.